

CHARACTERS
OF A
SINCERE HEART,
And the
COMFORTS thereof,
Collected out of the,
WORD OF GOD,

By
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1 Sam. 16. 7.

*Man looketh on the outward appearance, but
Lord looketh on the heart.*

Psal. 51. 6.

*Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts:
and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to
know wisdom.*

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To the much Honour'd and vir-
tuous Lady HESTER
HONYWOOD of
Marks-Hall in the County of
of Essex:

Grace, Mercy, and Peace from God
our Father, and Jesus Christ
our Lord.

Honoured Madame,

DEDICATIONS of Books
to Persons of great rank
and Quality, are of great
antiquity, for St. Luke Dedicates Luke 1. 3.
Act 1. 1.
two Treatises To the most excellent
Theophilus. And now a daies it's
usual to dedicate Books to such Per-
sonages, who are (probably) ready
to approve them by their Patronage
and practice.

A 2

As

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As to my own concernment, I the rather prefix your name to this little Treatise, not only to acknowledge with all thankfulness, the many great Favours, which I have received from you, but especially I am encouraged to present those things to your view whereof you have had so large experience as you can give Testimony to the truth of them, both as to your judgement and affections.

I therefore am your remembrancer of those things, whereof (as I doubt not) you have experimental knowledge, and my design is to comfort you with those comforts, wherewith I my self have been comforted: It's the charge which the Angel gives unto the Church of Thyatira.--- But that which you have already, hold fast: And the Apostle's charge is suitable unto that,--- Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, (for he is faithful that promised.)

Rev. 2.25.

Heb. 10.23.

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promised.) Likewise for self examination, and tryal of our evidences for heaven, we are frequently commanded, -- More particularly St. Paul chargeth the Corinthians, and us as well as them. -- Examine yourselves: know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you? except ye be Reprobates. So likewise the Church (after she had undergone great afflictions and sufferings) makes this serious deliberate resolution--- Let us search and try our waies, and turn again to the Lord. 2 Cor. 13. 5.

You being (Madam) an old Disciple, and an experienced Christian, cannot but know, that it's a duty of great concernment, and in an especial manner incumbent upon all faithful Ministers to endeavour in their Preaching to distinguish the pretious from the vile: for so saith the Lord to the Prophet Jeremiah. If thou take Jer. 18. 19.

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take forth the pretious from the vile,
thou shalt be as my mouth: let them
return unto thee but return thou not
to them.

Our blessed Lord and Saviour, the
best Example and the exactest Pat-
tern for our imitation, in that in-
comparable Sermon which he Preach-
ed in the Mount, makes mention of se-
ven Beatitudes, each of them being
a rare discriminating character,
whereby good and bad, blessed and
cursed, are distinguished one from a-
nother: For if the poor in spirit be
blessed, then the rich & proud in spi-
rit are cursed; & if the pure in heart be
blessed, then the impure in heart must
be cursed, &c. Because of Contra-
rieties there are contrary consequen-
ces. And Christ himself is the best
Interpreter of himself, for when
he pronounced blessings upon such as
were poor, and hungred, and wept,
he pronounced woes against such as
were

Luke 6. 20.
21. 22.

v. 24, 25,
26.

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were rich and full, and of whom all men speak well.

Likewise our Saviour shewes the absolute and indispensable necessity of Regeneration and being born from above, as may appear by Christs answer to Nichodemus.-- Jesus answered, and said unto him, Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. *And Regeneration is a Characteristick note of distinction between the old and new birth. Farther, Christ puts a vast difference between a good and a bad tree: For (saith he) A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not good fruit is hewen down, and cast into the fier, wherefore by their fruits you shall know them: And Christ makes Love one to another, a mark of his Disciples.*

Ioh. 3. 3.

*Matt. 7.
18, 19, 23.*

Ioh. 13. 35.

And

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*And after Christs Example, his
 Apostles lay down marks and signes
 to distinguish the good from the bad.
 For instance, How frequently doth
 St. John press the grace of love, and
 lays it down as an infallible sign of
 one that is translated from death to
 life -- We know that we have passed
 from death to life, because we love
 the Brethren: He that loveth not
 his Brother abideth in death. Saint
 Peter expressly manifests what we
 should avoid, --- Wherefore laying
 aside all malice and guile, and hy-
 pocrisies, and envies, and all evil
 speakings, &c and he injoyes what
 we should reduce unto practice, As
 new born babes, desire the sincere
 milk of the word, that ye may grow
 thereby. And it follows by way of
 Character, representing such who are
 new born babes in these words. If so
 be that ye have tasted that the Lord
 is gracious, Saint Paul gives an e-
 vident,*

1 Joh. 3. 14.

1 Pet. 2. 1,
2, 3.

2 Cor. 5. 17.

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his vident sign of such who are in Christ
 ries by the new Creature wrought in them.
 ad. Therefore if any man be in Christ he
 oth is a new Creature: old things are
 and past away, behold all things are be-
 of come new. And, to mention only one
 to more scripture to this purpose, The
 sed Apostle discovers a great difference
 ove between the old man and the new, and
 not thus presseth our duty upon us: If
 int Eph. 4. 22,
 we 23, 24.
 ng so be that ye have been taught by
 y- him as the truth is in Jesus, That ye
 vil put of concerning the former con-
 at versation, the old man which is cor-
 As rupt according to the deceitful lusts:
 re And be renewed in the spirit of
 w your minde: and that ye put on the
 of new man, which after God is crea-
 re ted in righteousness, and true holi-
 so ness.

Now having such abundant war-
 rant from the example of Christ and
 his Apostles, I question not in the
 least,

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least, but that in the exercise of our Ministry we are obliged according to the Rule of the word of Gods to lay down Characters of a Regenerate estate, and to distinguish sincere and real Professors, from such who are only Nominal and Hypocritical. Many there are who name the name of Christ, but depart not from iniquity: But it's the express command of the word: And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. Many there are that content themselves, with the Angel of the Church of Sardis, to have only a bare name to live; But he is reproved by Christ, Rev. 3. 1, 2. And unto the Angel of the Church in Sardis write, these things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven Stars, I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that livest and art dead. Bewatchful and strengthen

Rev. 3. 1, 2.

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strengthen the things that are ready to dye: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Many there are who rest satisfied with a bare form, and deny the power of godliness: But the Apostles command is --- Having a form of godliness, 2 Tim. 3. 5. but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

The Sincerity of the Heart is that which God requires. Behold thou desireth truth in the inward parts: Psal. 51. 6. Josh. 24. 14. 101. 4. 24. God must be feared and served in sincerity and in truth: God is a spirit, and his worship must be a spiritual worship: So saith our Saviour, God is a spirit and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit, and in truth. The fruits of the spirit are reckoned up by the Apostle to be in all goodness, righteousness and truth. Eph. 5. 9. Goodness may be reckoned to the duties of the first Table,

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Table, and righteousness to the duties of the second Table, but Truth (i.e.) Sincerity, refers to both Tables respectively. Sincerity is the ground of rejoycing, For (saith the Apostle)

Cor. I. 12.

Our rejoycing is this, the Testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation, and more abundantly to you ward. And the same Apo-

Phil. I. 10.

He prays for the Philippians, That ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere, and without offence till the day of Christ. And although he is sensible of his own, and of his Brethrens insufficiency for the great work of the Ministry, as may appear by that Question which he propounds: And

2 Cor. 2. 16.

who is sufficient for these things? Yet he makes this profession of his own,

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own, and his brethrens sincerity. For
 (saith he) we are not as many
 which corrupt the word of God: 2. 17.
 but as of sincerity, but as of God
 in the sight of God, speak we in
 Christ.

To draw to a close of this Epistle:
 It is the sincerity of the Heart, which
 both to Ministers and people is a
 great ground of consolation. The
 grand design which I only drive at
 in this small Treatise, is to stir up
 myself and others, that every one in
 good earnest may Chatechise his own
 heart, and propound this great need-
 ful Question. Is my heart sincere
 with God? For answer to this
 question, I have by way of Chara-
 cter, according to the Rule of the
 word of God, endeavoured to declare
 in several particulars, wherein the
 sincerity of the heart consists.

This Treatise I preached as to
 the

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the substantial's thereof, (which since I have enlarged) in the publick Congregation at Cosfield in Essex. To you (much Honoured Madam) I offer this Mite, or Testimony of my grateful acknowledgment of those many signal favours, which both myself and my nearest Relations have recieved from you, both in our sickness, and health, God hath made you a worthy instrument to do good to many, and I hope you will fare the better for their prayers. That Bread which you have cast upon the waters, you shall find after many daies. May the Lord lengthen out your daies, for the glory of God, and for your own good, and the good of many others: And may you be one of those of whom the Psalmist makes mention; Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the Courts of God; They shall still

Psal. 92. 13.

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still bring forth fruit in old age;
They shall be fat and flourishing.
I commend your self, and all your
Relations, to the Gracious Provi-
dence of God, beseeching him to
guide you by his counsell till he
bring you to glory. I remain

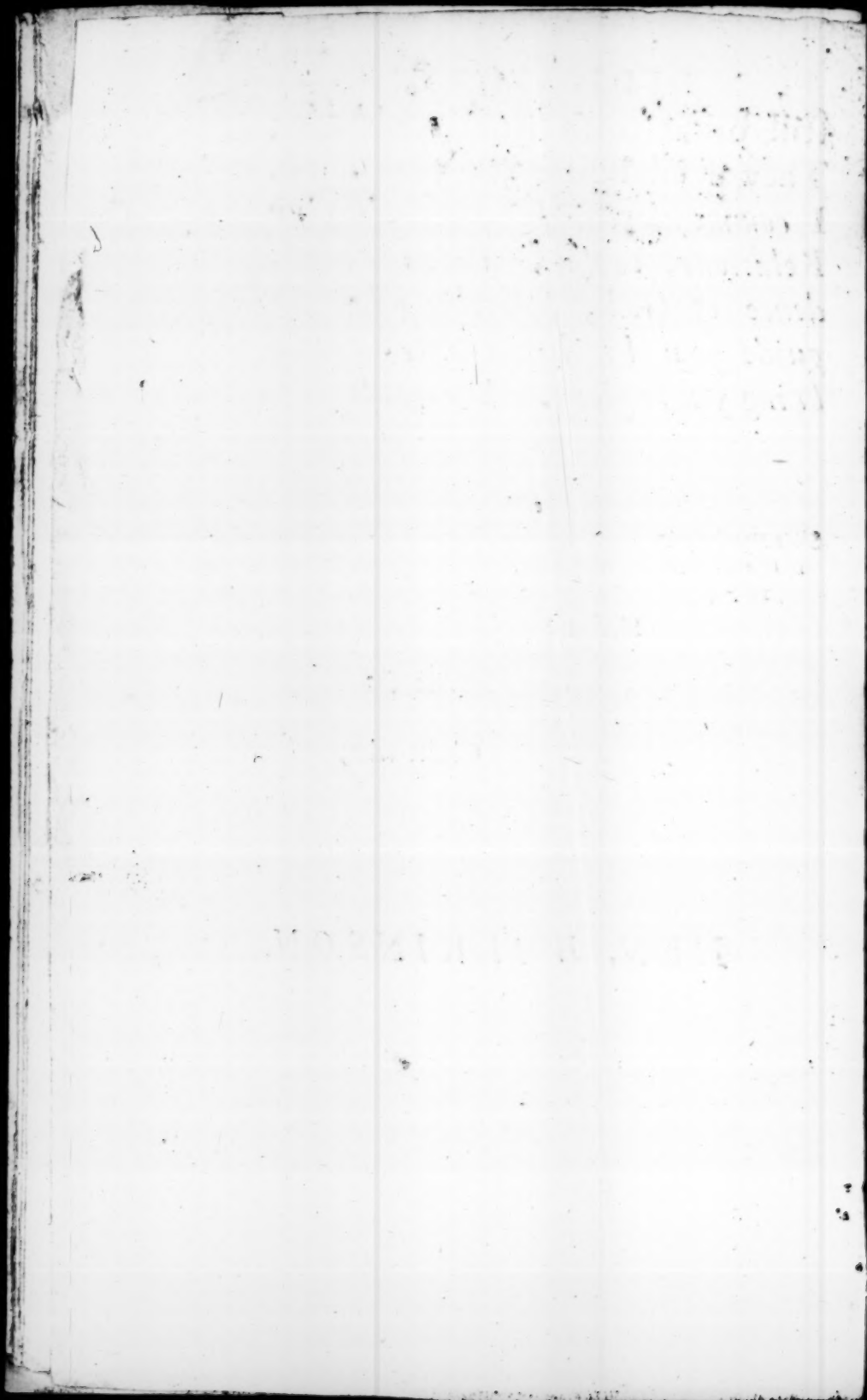
Sible Henningham
in Essex, Jan. 1.
1674.

Madame

Your Servant for

Christ sake,

HEN. WILKINSON.





CHARACTERS OF A SINCERE HEART.

CHAP. I. *Of Spiritual Poverty.*

THE first Character of a Sincere Heart, is, *Spiritual Poverty*: Charact. 1. Spiritual Poverty.
And Spiritual Poverty consists in emptying of the Heart to the utmost, of all and every thing, whatever is *Self*; as self-love, self-righteousness, self-opinion, self-sufficiency, self-reasonings and disputings with flesh and blood, and self-confidence, and self-conceit, and all manner of self-ends, self-aims, and self-designs, So that when a Christian is wholly emptied of himself, and he hath learned that great and excellent Gospel-Lesson of *Self-denial*, and he comprehends himself, as he is in
A him-

himself only, nothing, and less then nothing, and is vile in his own eyes, and he magnifies the riches of Gods mercy, and ascribes all honour and glory to God. Such a one is Sincere, & upright hearted towards God. Jacob whom the Holy

Gen. 25. 27.

* Tantum

dicis fuisse

simplicem;

On quidem

pro integro

& sincero

ut plurimum

accipitur,

Calv.

Jacob viz.

integer, sim-

plex: Græci

ἀπλῶς &

alienus ab

omni fraude

dolo, &

calditate,

Mercer. in

Loc.

Ghost stiles a plain man, (i. e.) as* some interpret, a sincere and single hearted man, was a man of an humble spirit, withness his confession, *I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant*, Gen. 32. 10. David was poor in spirit, & endowed with that excellent grace of Humilitie: For he was so vile in his own eyes, as he accounted himself a worm and no man, Psal. 22. 6. and when the Lord sent Nathan the Prophet to tell what great things God had, and would do, for him, as to take him from

2 Sam. 7. 8. and that he had cut off all his enemies, and made him a great name, ver. 9. and that he would fix the children of Israel, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and have no more, and that the Lord would make David a house; how David received these messages from the Prophet, is apparent by the humility and thankfulness, whereof he gave a large testimony, 2 Sam. 7. 18.

19. Then went King David in, and sate before the Lord, and he said, who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight O Lord God; but thou hast spoken also of thy servants house, for a great while to come, and is this the manner of man, O Lord God? Agur was a wise man, and the more wise, because the more humble, and the more esteem'd of by God, by how much the more vile he was in his own opinion. His acknowledging himself to be *more brutish* Qui sibi vilis est Deo charus est. Bern. than any man, and not to have the understanding of a man, plainly declares the lowliness and poverty of his spirit. S. Paul, who was the chiefest of the Apostles, and more eminent in gifts, and graces, then any of them, yet he had so cheap and mean thoughts, and valuation of himself, as to confess that he was chief 1 Tim. 1. 15. of sinners.

Every humble spirited person, who Sect. 2. trades most at home, and negotiates about his own soul, in heart-searching, and self-examination, thinks far worse of himself, and is more abject in his own eyes, then in the eyes of the worst of his enemies. Wherefore he is sensible of his forlorn and miserable estate: He knows
A 2 himself

himself to be poor, and indigent, and therefore he goes to Christ to enrich him. He apprehends himself blind, and ignorant, or knowing nothing as he ought to know, and therefore he begs eye-salve, and a spirit of illumination from Jesus Christ. He is sensible of his nakedness, and therefore he goes to Christ for cloathing, knowing that the immaculate robes of Christs righteousness can alone cloath and cover his nakedness. For this is that soul-saving Counsel, which Christ gives to the Angel of the Church of the *Laodiceans*, — *I counsel thee to buy of me Gold tryed in the fire, that thou may'st be rich, and white rayment, that thou may'st be cloathed, that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve that thou may'st see.* By Gold we are to understand true grace, especially true faith, which is much more precious than Gold, and this faith is not an ordinary faith, but 'tis a tryed faith, for its said *tryed in the fire*, (*i. e.*) such a faith that is genuine, and of the right stamp, that can endure the tryal of the sword and the tryal of afflictions though they be fiery. Further, by *white rayment* we are to understand, the unspotted and innocent robes of Christs righteousness. And by *eye-salve*, we are to understand the

Rev. 3. 18.

Suadendi
non impe-
randi verbo
uritur Do-
minus, quo
illorum re-
tundat infa-
miam qui ni-
si violenter
trahantur
non arbi-
trantur se a
Domino ad-
monitos,
tractos vel
vocos.

Bulling.

1 Pet. 1. 7.

the illumination of the spirit, even that wisdom that cometh from above. All these we are counselled to buy of Jesus Christ :

* yet here is no gap opened to let in Popish merit : Here is not the least allowance given to that rotten Doctrine of Merits : For all graces which we have, and all gifts which we have, are gratuitously given us by God, and to him alone we must ascribe the praise and glory of all.

Whoever then hath received this great and excellent grace of Spiritual Poverty, the free gift of God (which is by our Saviour mentioned the first, and leads the van to the rest of all the Beatitudes) he is obliged more and more daily to search his heart thoroughly, and so to find out, and be sensible of, his own lost, forlorn, and utterly undone condition as in himself, and so likewise to apprehend his absolute necessity of making sure of his interest in Christ; who was for this very purpose sent into the world,

to seek and to save that which was lost : For *Mat. 18. 11.* he professeth, *Matth 15. 24. I am not sent, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.* He then, who is so poor in spirit, and vile, and despicable, and altogether less than nothing in his own eyes, O!

Christus est qui merces salutis celestis venales nobis promittit, et offert in Evangelio, non pretio, vel meritis parandas, sed precibus & fide gratis Deo accipiendas. Hoc monopolium est Christi, extra quod nulla est salus, Pareus.

what hast doth he make unto Christ. As poor men flock apace to the Lord Almoner, to receive Alms, so all spiritually poor Christians make hast unto Christ, who only can enrich them with never fading riches. They therefore apply themselves unto Christ, and apply his merits unto themselves. They are thoroughly apprehensive of their absolute necessity of getting a saving interest in Christ, and that without him, they are utterly undone, wherefore with all expedition they run to Christ, and they lay hold on him by faith. (for he is their life) and they will not let go their hold.

Sec. 3.

Further, whosoever tis endowed with this rare and pretious grace of Spiritual Poverty, he, I say, exerciseth himself in a frequent and serious meditation of the promises of the Gospel, and he applies them particularly for his own singular consolation. He likewise meditates of, and with all thankfulness accepts of, the invitations of the Gospel, and he makes particular application of them unto his own soul. He is one of those *who labors and is heavy laden*, and therefore he goes to Christ for rest: For so runs the Invitation, and promise, both made by Christ, Mat, 11. 29. *Come unto me*

me all yet that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

But some are conscious to themselves of so much unworthiness, as they are afraid to come, least if they do come, they be utterly rejected: But

O! Christian, labour to be sensible of thy unworthiness, and mourn for the same, and then, notwithstanding thy unworthiness, be not discouraged; O! do not slacken thy pace, but make hast to go to Jesus Christ, for he hath made a gracious promise, — *And him that com-*

eth to me I will no wise cast out, Joh 6.37. Although you are poor and indigent, blind, miserable and naked, and can claim no merit from any thing, no not the best things, which you can do, yet you must not exclude your selves, and so refuse that great salvation offered to you in the Gospel. The exhortation is patherical, Heb. 2. 3. *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?* If you are thirsty, and vehemently desire Christ, you have many special invitations: One is *Isaiah 55. 1. Ha every one that thirsteth, come unto the waters, and let not want and penury set a barr against your coming, for it followeth, And he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat,*

*οι κοπιῶντες ἔτι πειρη-
τιμένοι, Animo delas-
fati dicuntur qui sub pec-
catorum gravi sensu animo
fatiscent. Beza.*

*Refocillatio, quam pro-
mittit in gratuita peccato-
rum remissione sita est, quæ
nos tranquillat, Calvin.*

Ioh. 6.36.

*Tam pau-
peres quam
divites suis
gracia Dei
recipiunt, ac
largiter po-
tunt, Mufc.
in 1. oc.*

yea come buy Wine, and Milk without money, and without price. Another Invitation is made by Christ amongst a great confluence of people.— *In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood, and cryed saying, if any man thirst let him come unto me and drink. Joh. 7. 37.*

A Third Invitation is Rev. 22. 17. *And the Spirit, and the Bride say, Come, and let him, that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him take of the water of life. Now least any may affix a false gloss, and a corrupt sense upon those Invitations, as*

*Liberum facio cui libet
veniendi: neminem ex-
cludo, prorsus omnes veni-
re jubeo. Omnes venite &
accipite aquas. Domino
sit gloria. Bulling.*

Free-will: I answer, That all those Invitations abundantly manifest the Free grace of God and ascribe nothing to mans

Free will (which if we trust to it, will prove an Egyptian reed to deceive us.)

We read Ezrah. 1. 5. *Then rose the chief of the Fathers of Judah, and Benjamin, and the Priests and the Levites, with all them, whose spirit God had raised to go up, to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem.*

Before we can come to Christ and accept of the Gospel Invitation, God raiseth up our hearts: For saith our Saviour. Joh. 6. 44. *No man can come to me except the Father, which hath sent me draw him. But when he draws us we*

can

can run (as the spouse professeth) Can.

1. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee.* Before we can run the waies of Gods Commandments, he enlargeth our hearts. So saith the Psalmist. Psal. 119. 32. *I will run the way of thy Commandments: When thou shalt enlarge my heart.*

Sect. 4. He that is poor in spirit is weak, sick, and in a distressed condition, as to his own apprehension, and therefore of necessity (all delaies being laid aside) he must repair to Christ, and beg strength, health, Comforts, even all from him, as the only skilfull Physitian who alone can Work an effectual cure. And Christ is the only Physitian, and his blood is the only Medicine; and both the Physitian, and his Medicine are of infinite dignity, price, value. For no Physitian, nor no Medicine can work that cure, which Christ works, Psal. 103. 3. *For he pardoneth all iniquities, and healeth all diseases.* Christ prepares and prescribes the Medicine: our Duty is to apply it to our wounds: For the most Sovereign Medicine cures not in preparation, but in Application. Wherefore we must imitate the Apostle, by making a particular Application of of Christ and all his merits unto our own

own souls. For (saith he) Gal. 2. 20. *I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life with I now live in the Flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* After Thomas had a demonstrative Conviction of Christ's personal appearance after his resurrection, he made use of a Pronoun Possessive to his comfort, saying, Joh. 20. 28. *My Lord, and my God.* Whoever he be, that is so poor in spirit as to be nothing and less then nothing in his own accompt and value Christ above all,

πὶ πάντα καὶ ἐν πᾶσι,
Χριστός.

Est Christus (sepe scilicet unicus renatis eosque regenerans) omnia, scilicet ad salutem necessaria: Omnibus, nimirum fidelibus sanctificatis & Christo copulatis, Est illis omnia meritorie. Daven.
in Loc.

Ἄυτός μέ ἐστι δόξα, καὶ αὐτός μέ ἐστι πατήρ, καὶ αὐτός μέ ἐστι πνεῦμα.
Macar. Hom. 16.

and (as the Apostle phraseth it) Col. 3. 11. *All in All*, he (questionless) is in the state of blessedness; for (saith our Saviour, Matth. 5. 3.) *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.* Observe how low the Foundation is laid, even in *Poverty of spirit*: But Christ setteth a high Roof and glorious superstructure upon so low a Foundation, even *the Kingdom of heaven.*

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Concerning the highest priceing and
valneing of Jesus Christ.

A Second Character of a sincere Heart *Chara-*
is to set the highest Price, Value and *Act 2.*
Estimation upon Jesus Christ. This is *The highest*
an infallible Sign of a true Beleiver, *praising*
whose heart is upright with God, to *and valu-*
Price, Value, Esteem, and Preferr Christ *ing of Jesus*
in our judgments, and affections before *Christ.*
all the Riches of the World in their *Secl. I.*
greatest Estate, and confluence. This
the Apostle sets down as an infallible
Sign of a true Believer, 1 Pet. 2. 7. *Una*
to you therefore which believe he is preti- i rium.
ous O! how high an Estimation did the
Love-sick Spouse discover concerning
Jesus Christ: For (said she) Cant, 5. 10.
My beloved is white and ruddy, the cheif- Jesus
est among ten thousand. Christ is *white Christus to-*
by his innocency, purity, and immacu- *tus suavis*
late righteousness, but he is *ruddy* by *est, totus sa-*
reason of his bloody sufferings, and the *labris est,*
effusion of his pretious blood. To *totus de-*
which the Prophet Isaiah alludes in a *lectibilis,*
lofty piece of Reticrick Esa. 63. 1, 2, 3. *totus deni-*
Who is this that cometh from Edom? with *que secundū*
died Garments from Bozrah? This is *sponse Vo-*
cem des-
derabilis.
B: 21.

to

Loquitur
Ecclesia &
Christum ip-
sum allo-
quitur.
Quare ves-
testuaru-
bide sunt?
Piscator, in
Loc.

Joh. 19. 34.
Rev. 19. 13.
Amictus
eruentus in-
dicat victo-
rem redu-
cem ab hosti-
um strage
Par. Tinct.
um non pio-
rum sangui-
ne, ut Ro-
mas sed im-
piorum
Grot.

Hec cor-
ruptio est
quod ad-
monet cor-
pus non mi-
nus quam a-
nimam sub-
jectum esse
Deo. Galv.
Ezek. 34. 29.
Hag. 2. 7.

to be understood of Christ, as may ap-
pear more evidently by what followes,
viz: *This that is glorious in his apparell,*
travelling in the greatness of his strength,
I that speak in righteousness, mighty to
save. Wherefore art thou red in apparrell
and thy garments like him, that treadeth
the wine fat? This scripture represents
the meritorious sufferings of Christ, in
pouring out his most pretious blood out
of his veins. His body was pierced with
a Spear, and forthwith came thereout
blood and water. St. John in the Reve-
lation gives us a farther Evidence-- *And*
he was cloathed with a vesture dipt in blood
and his name is called the word of God.
Oh! what an inestimable value should
we have of Christ, who bought us, and
paid for the purchase the greatest price
that ever was paid, even the price of his
innocent, meritorious, and most preti-
ous blood. The Apostle observes the
Doctrine, and enjoyns us to make parti-
cular application thereof— *For* (saith
he) *1 Cor. 6. 20. Ye are bought with a*
price, therefore glorify God in your body,
and in your spirit, which are Gods. Christ
is called by the Prophet Ezekiel a *Plant*
of renown. Christ is called by the Pro-
phet Haggai *The Desire of all Nations,*
and by Malachy *The Angel of the Cove-*
nant,

Sect. 1. Character of a sincere Heart.

13

nant, and by Zachary the Branch of Mal. 3. 1.
 Righteousness, and by Daniel The Messia- Zech. 3. 8.
 ah. Add farther, by way of Singularity Dan. 9. 26.
 and excellency and incomparable Bene-
 fit, Christ is call'd our Advocate and 1 Joh. 2. 1.
 Propitiation, our Redeemer and only Me-
 diator. Job. 19. 25. Christ hath trodd the
 wine press alone. 1 Tim. 2. 5. There is Isa. 63. 3
 none other given under heaven, whereby we
 must be saved, but by the name of Jesus.
Act. 4. 11. 12. Christ therefore as he is
 of infinite value and dignity in himself,
 so we ought to have the highest estima-
 tion of him, and to prefer him both in
 judgment and affections, before all the
 Kingdoms of the world, and the glory
 of them. Christ is compared to a Foun-
 tain, which is beyond compare with any Zech. 13. 1.
 other, for it is a Fountain opened to the
 House of David and to the Inhabitants of
 Jerusalem for sin, and for uncleanness.
 Christ is likewise compared to a Stone,
 and to such a one as excelleth others in
 admirable Properties. Isai. 28. 16.
 Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold
 I lay in Zion for a Foundation, a Stone, a
 tryed Stone, a pretious corner Stone, a sure
 Foundation: He that believeth, shall not
 make haste. Farther Christ is compared
 to the Pearle of great Price. Matth. 13.
 45. 46. Again the Kingdome of heaven

Matt. 13.
45, 46.

is like unto a Merchant man seeking goodly Pearls, who when he had found one Pearl of great price, he went, and sold all that he had and bought it. Whatever we esteem highly of, must go for Christ, the Pearl of Price: If we possess Christ in our hearts by faith, we are enriched with that possession, which is infinitely more worth than all the possessions of the Universe. Much value is set upon the Eastern, and Western treasures of the Indies, and great pains is taken to get them: *Impiger ex tremos currit Mercator ad Indos*. Yet they are not worth the naming, in comparison of the Riches of Christ. The knowledge of Christ is the most enriching knowledge, for Col 2.3. *In him are hid all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*. Whosoever hath a saving Interest in Christ, is richer than the greatest Emperor, who is ignorant of him.

O Thesau-
ris omnibus
opulentior
notitia Chri-
sti.

Señ. 2.

And hereunto, Where there is such a high valuation of Christ in the Judgment, there will of necessity follow ardency & strength of affection towards Jesus Christ. The apprehension of the exceeding great love of Christ to us should constrain us to love him with a reciprocal love. Love is the Loadstone of love, and love will never be paid, nor be contented and satisfied, but with its own

2 Cor 5.14.
συνέχων,
constringit,
cohibet (i.e.)
totos possi-
det ac regit,
ut ejus af-
fatu quasi
correcti a-
gamus om-
nia. Beza.

coyp

coyn; I mean love, answering love. And the greatest love which we can express to Jesus Christ, is only the reflection of those Beams, which he first darted upon us. Whatever love we manifest towards God is only the Return of that love, which he first shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Rom. 5. 5.
 We (saith the Apostle) love him, because 1 Joh. 4. 19. he first loved us. Where Christ is highly prized, that soul is inflam'd with ardent love to him. Neither is this an ordinary and common, but an extraordinary, and special love. This love is in the highest degree above the apprehension of Philosophers. They tell us, That there is *Calor ad octo*, and this is in *gradu intenso*, & *non in gradu remisso*. Something it is that expression represents, but we'll set forth the vehemency of Love in the Scripture Phrase: Love, *Psal. 120. 4.* is hotter then the coals of Juniper; and to such an extensive heat, so that *Cant. 8. 7.* many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it. But as for all those who love not the Lord Jesus, they are cursed in this world, and in the world to come: For (saith the Apostle 1 Cor. 13. 22. *Read Pyak in Lot.*) If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathama Maranatha. An Anathama alone is a dreadful Curse, but

Maran-
Domiaus,
Athan- ve-
nit Marana-
tha extrema
& ultima
species ex-
communica-
tionis quæ
Ebrais Sa-
matha di-
citur. Druf.

but that's not all, there is a *Maranatha* added to the *Anathema*; and this *Maranatha* is reserved until the second coming of Christ to judgment, and oh! how dreadful must their condition be at that great and terrible day, *who love not the Lord Jesus Christ*! Against them Christ will pronounce that dreadful sentence of condemnation, *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

CHAP. III.

A heart in love with holiness, evidenced in a holy life and conversation, is a Character of a sincere Heart.

Character
Third.
A heart in
love with
holiness.
Sec. I.

A Third Character of Sincerity, is a Heart in love with holiness: For when the Heart is emptied of all self-love, and self-confidence, and made thoroughly sensible of its own vileness and wretchedness, then Christ is highly valued and entirely loved, and cordially embraced and delighted in. Every true Believer

Believer loves holiness for it self, be-
cause it is the image of God. And (as
Bucer us'd to say) where there is *Aliquid*
Christi (i. e.) any impression of the image
of Christ, there we ought to place our
love. Wherefore the Apostle gives a strict
Command — *Be renewed in the spirit of*
your mind. And that ye put on the new
man, which after the image of God is cre-
ated in righteousness and true holiness.

Where this image of God is, (which con-
sists in righteousness and true holiness)
it is stampt upon the heart, and is visible
in the life, and there is such a transcen-
dent beauty, purity, and excellency, and
amiableness in all the waies of holiness, as
the least glimpse of them are abundant-
ly sufficient to delight, rejoyce and ravish
the soul of every true believer. What
Plato said of Moral vertue, much more

may be said of Theological vertue (i. e.)
Soul-saving grace, and holiness, that if
it could be discerned by Corporal eyes, it
would raise the heart to a wonderfull de-
fire thereof. Oh! how did David love
the Law of God! He professeth that Gods
Law was his Delight, and that Psal. 119.

he loved the commandments above
Gold, yea above fine gold. Psal. 119. 127.
Thy Testimonies (saith he) I have taken
an Heritage for ever, for they are the

B rejoycing

Eph. 4. 23

24

in Sincero

corde & i-

nterius tunc

alio die.

Sanctitas

veritatis est

vera sacra

minime fu-

gata Drus.

Tali inno-

centia &

sanctitate

que sunt in

esse non in

videri

Groc.

Si Virtus

& humanis

oculis possit

cerni admi-

rabile (sui)

desiderium

excitaret.

Plato.

Psal. 119.

111.

rejoycing of my heart. O ! What sweetness did David suck out of the Judgments of the Lord ! for (saith he) *The Judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether : More to be desired are they then Gold, yea then much fine Gold sweeter also then honey, and the honey comb.* There is a great reward in the very work of holiness : For it follows in the next words--*Moreover by them, thy Servant warned : and in keeping of them, there is * great reward*

** militas non mediocris, sed ingens sequitur, etiam si illi respectum retributionis alicujus non habeant sed simpliciter et sincera corde in viâ mandatorum Dei currant, unum, hac spectantes, ut Domino Deo suo gratificentur Mulc.*

** Qui Deum ideo colit ut aliud magis quam ipsum assequatur, non Deum colit sed illud colit quod concupiscit.*
August.

** si vere hoc dicunt, tyrannide band dubie,*

** religion for selfe and sinister ends, hoping to make a good Market to themselves by ingratiating themselves with some Professors for advantage sake, this is a very bad Sign, and comes farr short of a heart right with God. * So the Schemites Embraced circumcision upon a Politick design, to compass to themselves all the Estate of the Israelites Gen. 34. 25-26*
** Shall not their Cattle, and their substance, and every beast of theirs be ours, only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with*

with us. But that Polirick, and self-ended proposall did not prosper with the Sichemites, for we read immediatly after of their utter destruction: No more will any men thrive in the close of all, who seek their own ends and design onely selfe-Interests. The People followed Christ for the loaves, and many like the Persians worship the rising Sun, and seek only their own private ends, and some have two faces under one hood, and some imitate Water men rowing upon the Thames, who look one way and row another. The Apostles Censure is verified of multitudes—*For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christs:* But such mens hearts are not upright with God.

Et per vim cum illis agere specie fœderis statuerunt, quod vellent vi eorum bona accipere. Ita cum dolo se cum illis agerent iuste sunt puniti alioqui præter stuprum illata.
Merc.

Phil. 122;

Ad hereunto, wherever true holiness Sect. 2. is seated in the heart, it becomes exceeding fruitfull in the life, and appears so by those good fruits visible in a holy conversation. Not bare leaves, and formal professions will serve the turn, but there are required good actions. Christ must not only be in the tongue, to speak good of his name (which is our duty;) but he must be formed in us, and our hearts must be ravished with love to him, and Love must constrain us to yeeld ready &

cheerfull obedience to him. Not only a form but the power of godliness must exert and evidence it self in a Sanctified conversation. The Apostle cautions us against such, who content themselves with a bare outside-form of godlyneſs, and deny the power thereof—*Having a form of godlineſs, but deny the power thereof: from ſuch turn away.* There muſt not be only *μῆψως*, a formall profeſſion: But there muſt be *μεταμῶρφωσις* a transforming, Rom. 12. 2. *We muſt be transformed by the renewing of our minds.* Queſtionleſs, where the heart is ſincere towards God, there profeſſion and practice concur in a ſweet harmony, and where the profeſſion is in ſincerity, a holy life gives abundant Teſtimony thereunto: For we muſt *adorn the Doctrin of God* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) and then we *adorn the Doctrin of God* when we evidence the ſincerity of our profeſſion by the holineſs of our lives and converſations: For wherever holineſs is in ſincerity, and in truth, it is very diffuſive, and diſcovers it ſelfe in its vaſt extent, and latitude. It conſiſts not only in verbal profeſſions, but in real actions, nor is confined to one or to two acts, nor to a few particulars, but it is in the Habit, and extends it ſelfe to all manner

2. Tim. 3. 5.

μεταμορ-
φῶσι τῇ
ἀνακαινω-
σιν τῶ νο-
ῦς ὑμῶν.

Tit. 2. 10.

only manner of Conversation (as the Apostle
 must exhorts) *But as he that hath called you,*
 is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Con-
 versation. We must with all diligence
 pursue holyness (for so the Original im-
 ports) It is used of Hunters and Hounds,
 who follow the game, and take great
 pains in the pursuit thereof. Peace and
 Holyness are conjoyn'd by the Apostle—
 Follow peace with all men and holyness,
 without which no man shall see the Lord.
 Holy persons, and they only shall be
 made partakers of the blessed Vision:
 And they are thus distinguished from
 hypocrites by our Saviour—*Blessed are*
the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
 They are said to be pure in opposition to
 all manner of impurity, and profaneness,
 and pure in heart in opposition to all
 manner of hypocrisy. Whoever then
 hath hope to be made like unto God in
 happiness, in the highest Heaven, must
 be first made like unto God in holiness
 here on Earth. For holyness and hap-
 piness differr not substantially, but gra-
 dually: For Holiness is happiness in-
 choate in this World, and happiness is
 holiness perfected and consummated in
 the World to come. Let us take a narrow
 View of the Words of the Apostle—*Be-*
hold now are we the Sons of God, and it
doth

1 Per. 1. 15.

in ὁσῶν

ἀναστροφῇ

Heb. 12. 14.

διώκατε

Persequa-

tione pre-

mitte, Sum-

ma studio

entiniat.

Math. 5. 8.

Deum

jam videat

lamine gra-

tiae & vi-

debunt in

lumine glo-

riae, quae est

summa ho-

minis Bea-

titudo.

Spanhem.

1 Joh. 3. 2.

*Non sane- doth not yet appear, what we shall be 3 But
tate tan- we know, that when he shall appear, we
tum, sed a- shall be like him, for we shall see him as he
ternitate & beatitudine, is. Now for the right Interpretation of
at sic multo those words, we must interpose this
magis filii
eius quam
nunc.*

Grot.

Lev. 11. 44.

Lev. 19. 2.

Lev. 20.

1 Pet. 1. 16.

1 Joh. 3. 3.

non sicut proportionis. In variety of places in Holy Scripture, we are commanded to be holy, as God is holy; yet we must know and acknowledge, that it's altogether impossible for us poor finite Creatures to attain to that equality of holiness, which is in God: However it is our obliged duty to endeavour according to our utmost ability, after a similitude and conformity to God. Similitudes are in the Predicament of Quality, and according to Quality, we are said to be like, or unlike. But similitudes are not in the Predicament of Quantity: for it's altogether impossible for any Creature to be equal and hold any proportions of holiness, with the Infinite, and Everlasting Creator. But what's the Grand Duty incumbent on all those, who hope to be partakers of the blessed Vision. The Apostle makes mention—
And every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure: Both outward and inward purity 3 holiness

ness of Heart, as well as Holiness of life are essentially requisite to a good Christian. Both Hands and Hearts (as St. James commands) must be cleansed, and purified——**Cleanse your hands ye Sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double minded.* Not only outward impurity of the Body, but inward impurity of the Heart, not only practical uncleanness, but speculative uncleanness should be utterly abhorred, and abandoned altogether : For so runs the Charge of the Apostle——*Having therefore these promises, (dearly beloved) let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* This then is an undoubted Conclusion consonant to the Rule of the word. That where holiness is cordially embraced, loved, desired, and delighted in, and rightly priced in the Judgment, and preferred as the true Wisdom, before Rubies and all manner of pretious Stones, and where holiness is practiced in the life and Conversation, questionless that heart is upright and sincere towards God, notwithstanding many personal Infirmities (which we grieve for and dislike of) while we are in this Vale of misery.

Iam. 4. 8.

* *unclean*

persons can

have no

commence

with God.

If you

would have

a holy life

you must get

a clean

heart v D.

Manton in

Lo.

2 Cor. 7. 1.

ἐπιτελέω-

τες ἀνο-

σώμην.

In divinis.

Cultu nihil

mutilū sed

omnia abso-

luta esse de-

cet.

Calv.

CHAP. IIII.

Of ingenuous Sorrow for Sin.

Charact. 4.
Ingenous
sorrow for
any Sin.

A Fourth Character of Sincerity is Ingenous sorrow for all Sin. This Epithete *Ingenuous*, I therefore name, because I would lay down hereby a discriminating note between that sorrow; which is for the Sin, and that which is onely for the punishment.

scd. 1. That sorrow I call ingenuous which is for the Sin, more then for the Punishment, and this is a Filial kind of sorrow, That I call servile and disingenous, which is more for the Punishment, then for the Sin. A Child of God understands the nature of Sin, as to it's filthiness, guiltiness and punishment, which is the consequent thereof, and therefore he laies Sin to heart, and is grieved and vexed at the very heart, because God is thereby dishonoured and his holy Law is broken. A Godly mourner mourns for Sin as it is Sin, because of it's filthiness, and defilement, and because it

it displeaseth the only Holy Lord God, and is odious and abominable in his sight. The Eye of every upright man affects his Heart, and melts him into Tears of Godly sorrow, and works an inward compunction, and a heart breaking sorrow. And this is that sorrow, which is of the right stamp, a genuine and ingenuous kind of sorrow. And where ever this ingenuous sorrow is, it may be fully evidenced by seven Apostolical characters mentioned by the Apostle: For, *Behold* (saith the Apostle) ^{2 Cor. 7.} *this self same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you? yea, what clearing of your selves? yea, what indignation? yea, what fear? yea, what vehement desire? yea, what zeal? yea, what revenge?*

There is a very great difference between the mournings of *Cain, Pharaoh, Ahab, and Judas*, (who only mourned and roared for the smart of punishment) and the mournings of *David, Paul, Peter, and Mary Magdalen*, who mourned for their sins; and therefore grieved, because they displeased so good and gracious a Lord God. For instance, *Pharaoh* often cried out, that the plagues inflicted on him and on his people might be taken away; but what plagues did he

he mean? I answer; he meant only the plagues of Frogs, Locusts, Caterpillars, &c. Pharaoh had a plague incumbent on him worse than all those, and that was the plague of a hard heart; of this plague he makes not any mention at all. A hard heart was his great sin, and it was inflicted upon him as a very great

Psal. 51. 4.

Verse 9.

1 Kings 21.
29.

judgment: But David cries out against himself for his sins, and makes a particular acknowledgment: *Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.* And he prays, *Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all my transgressions.* Ahab was a meer stranger to the Grace of Humility, and unacquainted with it altogether; yet it's said of him, that *he humbled himself*: and for his outward humiliation the judgment threatened was adjourned. *Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he*

Pœnitentia ductus sed que non permixta. Aliquid tamen de commertia pœnâ ob hoc detractum est. Grot. Exemplum bonitatis Dei: quatenus Achab quantumvis hypocriticè pœnitentiam agerit pœnâ meritis differt. Hinc colligi potest Deum, multo magis beneficium fore erga eos qui veram & seriam pœnitentiam egerint. Piscat.

humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his dayes; but in his sons dayes will I bring the evil upon his house. Yet of Ahab it may be more properly said, that he was *rather humbled than humble*; for the fear and horror apprehended of those dreadful judgments which were to be poured

poured down against himself, and Jezebel his Wife, and his Posterity, extorted from him an outward humiliation, which consisted in putting on Sackcloth, in fasting and going softly, and looking with a sorrowful and dejected countenance, yet all this while he had not one dram of true godly sorrow, and of true humility. How sad must be the condition of many loose Professors now a-dayes, who come short of such as Ahab was? and how dreadful must their condition be who come short of those who come short of Heaven? But St. Paul was a man of another spirit, he was not only humbled, but humble, and had the gift and grace of true humility; and he was a true Penitent, a sincere Convert, and a godly Mourner for sin; and he was so low and debased in his own eyes, as to account himself *the chief of sinners*. We read of Ahab's forwardness in offering himself a Voluntier and Slave to sin, so that this foul Brand of Infamy is stamp't upon him. *But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his Wife stirred up.* Ahab was active, and put himself forward to work all manner of mischief; he precipitated himself, without fear or wit,

into

into any desperate Adventure. He stuck at nothing, but ran on in a wild and mad career, following all sorts of wickedness with a full bent, propension and vergency of his soul, and with delight and complacency, driving a Trade for Sin, and for the Devil. We read of such who were almost starved for hunger, *1 Sam. 14.* *that they flew upon the spoil.* And likewise the Apostle stigmatizeth the vilest of sinners after this manner; *Eph. 4. 19.* *Who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.* Of this brand was Ahab. But on the contrary, St. Paul discovers a better spirit, as appears by his protestation; *Rom. 7. 22.* *I delight in the Law of God after the inward man.* He was passive, and with great grief and remorse of heart *Rom. 7. 14.* complains, that he *was sold under sin.* He discover'd great renitency, reluctancy and antipathies against every sin; For (saith he) *that which I do, I allow not; Rom. 7. 15.* *for what I would do, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.* O how did this holy Apostle fight and struggle, and exercise continual Combats and Conflicts, fighting against Sin and Satan! And thereupon he breaks forth into a doleful complaint; *Verse 23.* *But I see another Law in my members, warring against the Law of*

my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the Law of sin which is in my members. And it's observable, that all this while, and amidst all those sad complaints, Paul was a regenerate man; and a pregnant demonstration we have of our assertion, because he delighted in the Law of God, For (saith he) *I delight in the Law of God after the inward man.* And to delight in the Law of God in the inward man, cannot be appropriated to any, but to such only who are in the state of Regeneracy. And that the words of the Apostle are not by a figure, called *συνουσία*, it's evident that he speaks in his own, and not in another person, because he saith, *I my self.* And that the Apostle gives no allowance to himself in any sin is clear, because he professeth, *For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.* And the Apostle was apprehensive of his own impotency and insufficiency, to extricate himself out of those straits and difficulties wherein he was involved, and therefore he cries out for a deliverer, as appears in that pathetic exclamation: *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from*

Verse 22.
Totus homo
mente &
ratione re-
gitur: ab
ea itaque
Apostolo hoc
mo totus
appellatur,
Bucer.

Rom. 7. 25.

Αὐτὸς ἐγώ. Idem ego
vel ipse ego, quod à Pau-
lo emphaticè dictum est
ad designandum seipsum,
ne quis eum sub alienâ
personâ hactenus fuisse lo-
cutum suspicaretur. Estius
in Loc. Accipiamus hoc
in suâ ipsius personâ pro-
tulisse Apostolum. Zeger-
ius. Hac exceptione fi-
tetur se ita esse Deo ad-
dictum, ut reptans in ter-
ra multis sordibus inqui-
netur. Calv.

from the Body of Sin? By the Body of Sin, he understands all sorts of Sin, both Original and Actual, both the Root and Fruit; the corrupt Fountain, and the corrupt Streams. And none but God can deliver and set him free from them. He alone can deliver him, *who delivers us from the wrath to come*, 1 Thes. 1. 10.

Secl. 3.

Moreover, we are farther to consider that there is a vast and a wide difference between the howling of Dogs, and the crying of Children; and there is as much difference between the roaring of Gallies slaves, and the crying of godly Mourners. Wicked men, Slaves, and such as feel the present smart of the lash, cry out bitterly by reason of the great pain which they feel, and those smarting blows which they groan under.

* *Pœniteat
te quod tot
& tantis
flagitiis in-
volutus in-
luto facis
& miserie
diutius ja-
cuisti, pœ-
nitentiam
agens cor-
pus tuum
conteras &
furibunde
carnis a-
sello incen-
diorum se-
mina subtra-
bens, &c.
Bern. p.
331.*

* But as for all those who are true and unfeigned Mourners in *Zion*, they are deeply affected with godly sorrow for sin; and therefore they grieve and mourn, because they have been so hard-hearted as to kick a tender Father upon his Bowels; and have been so unthankful, as to sin against riches of mercy and loving kindness: Hence comes their Heart-piercing, Heart-breaking, and Soul-melting Sorrows, because they have been such undutiful Children, as to re-

bel against a gracious and merciful God,
 the Father of all mercies, and the God
 of all consolations. No massie great
 Mountain, no not the burthen of *Ætna*
 (as the Proverb is) no weight imagina-
 ble, or expresseible, can be so heavy, as
 is the burthen of Sin to a Child of God.
 And no manner of sorrow can be so bit-
 ter to a godly man, as is the sense of
 Sin, and sorrow for it. Nothing in the
 World can be so grievous, vexing, tor-
 turing, and every way afflictive to a
 good Christian, as Sin is: for Sin to him
 is like a Dagger sticking in his Heart,
 and continually tormenting and putting
 him to pain. Hereupon we read of *David*
 watering his Couch with his Tears; For *Psalm 6. 6, 7.*
 (saith he) *I am weary with my groaning;*
I make my Bed to swim, I water my Couch
with my Tears: Mine eye is consumed be-
cause of grief. Further he expresseth an
 addition to his mourning, because *his Psalm 42. 3.*
tears was his meat day and night. To eat
 the bread of affliction, and to drink the
 water of affliction is a sad calamity, but
 to feed on tears must needs be much
 sadder; but this is not all, for the
Psalmist confesseth further; *There is no Psalm 38. 3.*
soundness in my flesh, because of thine an-
ger; neither is there any rest in my bones,
because of my sin. Diseases, aches, pains,
 and

Omnium est
utilissimum
dolorem
corporis ex
morbo vel
ulcere loco
peccati ha-
bere, &
peccati eti-
am vocabi-
lo appella-
re : ita
vel hoc pa-
cto ad de-
testationem
peccatorum,
& horro-
rem indu-
ceretur.
Musc. in
Loc.

and broken bones are very grievous, but sin is, or should be, more grievous to us than all. *David* was of a sanguine complexion (and such naturally are more chearful.) *David* was a great and potent King, and an excellent Musician, yet the sense of his sins caused great sorrows to him, and made him go mourning all the day long. If then the thorough sense of sin, and the guilt thereof be set home upon the Conscience, there will be weeping and mourning. The eye will affect the heart, and cause inward compunction, and godly sorrow. Thus we read of *Ephraim* smiting upon his thigh. Of *Ephraim's* Conversion and Repentance (which is the Fruit of Conversion) the Prophet *Jeremy* makes mention : I have surely heard *Ephraim* bemoaning himself thus ; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a Bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. Turn thou me, and I shall be turned ; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented ; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh. I was ashamed, yea even confounded ; because I did bear the reproach of my youth. We shall likewise find the Prophet *Ezekiel* sighing to the breaking of his loyns. And *Job* abhorring himself, and repenting in dust

Jer. 31. 18,
19.

Ezek. 21. 6.

Job 42. 6.

dust and ashes. Many mourn for worldly
 losses, and shed many a tear for any loss
 which befalls them in their temporal
 estate; but few there are which mourn
 for sin, which produceth the greatest
 loss, even the loss of God's favor. Many
 have cause to repent for their worldly
 mournings, and to mourn for their
 mournings. See the vast difference be-
 tween worldly and godly sorrow, 2 Cor.
 7. 10. *For godly sorrow worketh repentance
 to salvation, not to be repented of; but the
 sorrow of the world worketh death.* If we
 could mourn for sin much more, and
 for the world less, we should lead more
 comfortable lives for the future, than
 ever we have formerly done.

CHAP. V.

Of Sorrowing and Mourning for others Sins.

A Fifth Character of a sincere Heart Charact. 5.
 is Sorrowing and Mourning for Mourning
for others
Sins.
 others Sins. A true godly Mourner, Sect. 1.
 (whose heart is upright with God) doth
 not confine and terminate his sorrow
 within the narrow compass of his own
 breast, and not let it extend any further,
 but

But he laies to heart, and unfeignedly mourns for the sins of others. Though (as it's commonly said) Charity begins at home, yet it must not end there; there must be a *plus ultra* for our Charity; it must be diffusive, and extended to others. And this is a great sign of love, when we are affected with, and affected for the sins of others, as well as for our own. Every good man is not only grieved for his own sins, but for the sins of others. Of this excellent temper was *David*, the man after God's own heart; who from his heart professed, *Rivers of tears run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy Law*, Psal. 119.

*Qui Spiritu
Dei agun-
tur hi sen-
tiunt tales
dolorum
stimulos,
at Loth cum
videret
scelerū om-
nium collu-
viem reg-
nare Sodo-
ma, &c.
Möllerus.*

136. But many there are whose motions are excentrick to that good man; for they are so far strangers to mourning for other mens sins, as they make their sins a matter of sport, mirth and mockery: However, they would be loath to be branded for fools, yet they cannot escape *Solomon's* censure, *Prov. 14.9. Fools make a mock at sin*. When men make sin a matter of pleasure and jesting, and make that a matter of laughter, which should be a cause of mourning, they shew themselves to be notorious fools. Many there are who deservedly may be rank'd amongst the chiefest and worst

worst sort of fools, who when they see men drunk, or hear them swear or curse, or talk lasciviously, and belch out such words as (even the Heathen could say) *corrupt good manners*, 1 Cor. 15. 33. then those men are transported with laughter and merriment, and they talk with delight and complacency, pleasing themselves with the remembrance of others sins. - These have *Solomon's* brand for fools; and their folly will appear to their shame, when they shall mourn for their laughter, and weep for their wicked pleasure and jollities. When some wrote Books in a jesting and deriding manner, concerning several faults of great men, after Mr. *Greenham*, a Reverend and Learned Divine, had read those Books, he was much offended at them, saying, *That sins ought to be made odious, and not onely made ridiculous.* Whatever sins we either discern in our selves, or in any other, we ought to mourn for them, and not to make a sport of them. A good Christian, who is acquainted with the pangs of the New Birth, and is sensible of that great filthiness and abomination that is in every sin, and that every sin grieveth and vexeth God, and is odious and abominable in his sight, such a man (I say) where-

φθίσουσιν
ἡδὴ χερσὶ
ὀμλίας
κακαί.
Menander.

Mr. Greenham works

ever he finds sin, he hates it, and mourns for it; and therefore he is not an idle Spectator, or over-curious Inquisitor, but a real Mourner for other mens sins. And whilst he mourns for others sins, he reflects upon himself as a person made of the same mould, and one of the same passions, and having the same corrupt nature. That excellent Father St. Bernard makes mention of an old man, who when he had heard that one of his Brethren had committed a scandalous sin, he wept bitterly, saying, *He sin'd to day, I may sin to morrow.* We are all by nature children of wrath, as others, Ephes. 2. 3. Nature makes no difference between us and the vilest of men: Who art thou then that boastest of a good nature, and a sweet disposition? though these things are very commendable amongst men, and much to be desired, yet there's much more required; for the best nature, without sanctifying grace, is no better than poyson in a golden Cup. Hath then God endowed thee with a greater measure of grace than thy Brother? remember that it is thy duty to acknowledg with all thankfulness, that what grace thou hast, is the free gift of God. *And what hast thou which thou hast not received? now if thou didst receive it,*

*Vid. Bern.
in Fest. St.
Martini.*

it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? Not the goodness of thy nature, but the free grace of God makes thee to differ from thy Brother. O therefore with all thankfulness acknowledg God's restraining grace, and sanctifying grace, whereby thou art kept from running with others into the same excess of riot. All sorts of grace come from God; as antecedent, concomitant, and subsequent; and a Christian hath need of them all, that so he may begin any good work, proceed, and persevere therein. If the Lord should leave thee to thy self, and let thee be fill'd with thy own ways, and give thee up to thy own hearts lusts, thou wilt quickly destroy thy self, by breaking out into such horrid sins, as the vilest of men give themselves to commit with delight and complacency. It was a good Prayer in an ancient Letany, *Lord, deliver me from my self*. That rare Father St. Bernard prayed, *Lord, deliver me from the evil man*, (i. e.) *my self*. Thus he counted himself the evil man, and thus he discovered singular humility.

*Ecipe me a malo homi-
ne, a me ip-
so. Bern. de
inter. Doms.*

Let's not neglect our duty, in being both affected with, and afflicted for the sins of others, as remembering, that we are men of like passions; and we are

Sect. 2.

dust and ashes, frail creatures, our Fathers being *Amorites*, and our Mothers *Hittites*; notwithstanding we are preserv'd from the commission of many sins which others ordinarily commit, we have great cause of thankfulness, but not the least cause of being proud. If through riches of mercy we have hopes of a saving interest in Christ, (we not knowing the secret Decree of God) for ought we know others may be fellow members of Christ's Body, and fellow Citizens of the new *Jerusalem*; we ought therefore to sympathize with them, and be alike affected with variety of Dispensations towards them, as the Apostle commands, *Rom. 12. 15* *Rejoyce with them that do rejoyce, weep with them that weep.* For any one to say as *Cain*, *Am I my Brothers keeper?* What am I concern'd in anothers matters? let every one look to himself: such speeches as these are so far below a Christian spirit, as they come short of a moral Heathen: For one of the best of Heathen Orators cites *Plato*, (and commends his saying) *We are not only born for our selves, but our Country, our Parents; our Friends challenge a part of us.* And Sympathies and Antipathies are critical Dispensations, and discriminate Friends from Enemies.

*Pro clare
scriptum est
a Platone
non nobis
solum nati
sumus, sed
ortus nostri
partem pa-
triam, partem
parentes
vendicant,
partem a-
mici. Cic.
off. lib. 1.*

Enemies. If then our Brethren be in adversity, then we should mourn with them; if they be in prosperity, we should rejoyce with them. *Solomon* tells us, *Eccles. 3. 11.* that *God hath made every thing beautiful in his time, also he hath set the world in their heart.* And that shews the beauty of Providence; for God hath abundantly discovered his beautiful ordering of all the affairs of the World, representing his infinite Wisdom and gracious Providence. Now seasons of Providence are to be observed, and we ought to act accordingly; as the same Wise man exhorts, *Eccles. 7. 14.* *In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.* And as we ought to take notice of Providences in general, so we should take notice of the particular conditions of others, as considering that all things come by a Providence, either permitting or approving. No sin is approved of, but altogether abhorred by Almighty God; yet God permits that which he approves not of. For the greatest of sins which the Jews committed, in embrewing their hands in the blood of Christ, came to pass by

Divine permissive Providence; (as St. Peter spake *Acts* 2. 23.) *Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.* That which was an Act of the highest Malice in the Jews, was an Act of great Providence in God.

Wherefore though we cannot (though if we could we ought) prevent and hinder the commission of sins in others, yet (be they never so bad) we ought heartily to mourn for them. So did *Lot* mourn for the abomination of the *Sodomites*; though they were ripe for vengeance, by reason of their exceeding great wickedness, (as if they had attained unto the highest degree of sinning) yet *Lot* grieved and mourned for them, who no way grieved nor mourned for themselves. Of *Lot's* mourning for those wicked *Sodomites*, St. Peter sets an especial remark, *2 Pet.* 2. 7. *And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked.* The word imports more than an ordinary sorrow and vexation for their wickedness, for it signifies to be oppressed, wearied, and grievously afflicted. And it's further added; *For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul*

καταγο-
νιμετον,
Significas
opprimi, fa-
tigari, gra-
viter affli-
gi. Gerh.
in Loc.

Sect. 2. *Characters of a sincere Heart.*

41

Soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds, 2 Pet. 2. 8. And here is another word expressing a greater grief or vexation; the word is ἐλεεινότης. The word implies a sifting and searching; so in Aristophanes, & others note upon the word: So that many have been question'd by such searching and torturing to force confession. 2. The word signifieth to vex, rack and torment; and it expresseth the torments of Hell. Lot was as it were upon the rack, and for the time imagin'd himself to be so tormented in his Soul, as if he was in Hell, by seeing and hearing those abominations of the Sodomites. And as Lot, so the Prophet Jeremy was a true Mourner for the sins of others; he wept abundantly for the dreadful judgments inflicted on the Israelites: his Rhetorick is rais'd to a high pitch. My bowels, my bowels; I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noise in me, I cannot hold my peace; because thou hast heard, O my Soul, the sound of the Trumpet, the alarm of War, Jer. 4. 19. And he strains himself to a higher piece of Rhetorick, Jer. 9. 1. O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people. But he not only weeps for the

Vid. Rev.

14. 10.

βασιλεὺς

οὐρανῶν

καὶ τῆς

ἐκκλησίας

αὐτοῦ

the judgments, but in an especial manner for their sins, *Jer. 13. 17. But if ye will not hear it, my Soul shall weep in secret places for your pride.* By what hath been mention'd, let's utterly detest the careless, heedless temper of *Cain, Gallio, &c.* and let us look upon our selves concerned, not only to mourn for, and bewail our own sins, but mourn for, and bewail the sins of others also.

C H A P. VI.

Shewing, that all sincere-hearted Christians labour to approve their Hearts towards God.

*Charact. 6.
A sincere
heart ap-
proves it
self.
Sect. I.*

THE sixth Character of a sincere-hearted Christian, is to approve himself to God, and to put himself in the integrity of his heart upon the test, trial and examination of God himself, who only knows the heart, and alone can search it thorowly. Thus *David* durst not stand upon his own searching, but casts himself altogether upon God's search and trial: *Judg me, (saith he) O Lord, for I have walked in mine integrity;*

I have trusted also in the Lord, therefore I shall not slide. Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart, Psal. 26. 1, 2. Likewise in another Psalm David puts himself upon a farther test and trial, Psalm 139. 23, 24. Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts. And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. Job makes his appeals and applications unto God alone. Behold, (saith he) my witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high, Job 16. 19. Hence he discover'd a resolution truly heroical. I will not remove my integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live, Job 27. 5, 6. Variety of the foulest slanders are cast upon the people of God, (as Histories mention) even such lies and calumnies were invented, as bad as the Father of lies could invent. Nero, when Rome was burnt, imputed the burning of it to the Christians; and the Romish Gun-powder Traytors (had their Treason took effect) were resolved to have laid the whole Treason upon such whom they maliciously stigmatized with the nickname of Puritans. It's an old Policy (though there is not one dram of honesty

*Audacter
criminare
aliquid he-
rebit.*

nesty in it) of *Machiavel*; "To accuse
"boldly, and cast dirt enough, hoping
"that some may stick on. Yet notwith-
standing, all those whose hearts are sin-
cere and upright towards God, do raise
to themselves a ground of strong con-
solation, from the testimony of a good
conscience; that notwithstanding hu-
mane infirmities, the whole frame, ver-
gency, and resolution of their hearts is,
to walk in the fear of God all the day
long. The Apostle speaks in his own
name, and in the names of all upright-
hearted Christians, *2 Cor. 1. 12.* *For our
rejoycing is this, the testimony of our con-
science, that in simplicity, and godly sin-
cerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the
grace of God, we have had our conversa-
tion in the World, and more abundantly to
you-wards.* Wherefore then we must
make it our grand study and business to
approve our hearts to God, and alwaies
to walk as in the presence of God, as
having the fear of God before our eyes;
if so, amidst troubles, trials, and suffer-
ings, we may take abundant comfort
in the integrity of our hearts and con-
sciences.

Señ. 2.

It must be daily bewail'd (what we
cannot deny) that we are subject to
many infirmities, and shall never be
quite

quite exempted from them whilst we are in this World, yet if we groan under the burthen of them, and mourn for them, and pray and strive against them; there may be sincerity in the heart, notwithstanding human infirmities incident to our lives. We read in that Parable, *Matth. 25. 5.* that all the Virgins slept, even the five wise Virgins as well as the five foolish Virgins: *While the Bridegroom tarried, they all slumbred and slept.* That sleeping implies infirmity. Both wise and foolish went forth to meet the Bridegroom, verse 1. Both of them took their Lamps, verse 3. But the wise took Oyl in their Vessels, with their Lamps; i. e. they had grace in their hearts. Both wise and foolish had the Lamps of an enlightened judgment, and of an outward profession; but the wise had made provision for supplies, and augmentation of all the graces of the spirit of God. Those five wise Virgins, notwithstanding they slept as well as the foolish, yet they were admitted to the Marriage, when the foolish lost the season, and a door of hope was for ever shut against them. For we read *Matth. 25. 10.* And while they went to buy,

Per oleum unde lampades aluntur ne extinguatur poterit exponi cordis justitia, sinceritas & vigilantia, quæ est in verâ solida, & perseveranti fide Christi, & charitate non ficta. Nam sine tali corde, quid aliud est quicquid foris ostenditur, quam lampas quædam absque oleo. Musc. in Loc.

but, the Bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the Marriage, and the door was shut. The Spouse likewise had her infirmities, and she was sensible of them, so she professeth, Cant. 5. 2. I sleep, but my heart waketh. She confest (as some have observ'd) "That "security had oppress'd her in a great "measure; but yet the inward bent "and motion of her heart was active "and vigilant. Let us, Oh! let us secure this Fort-Royal of a good conscience; this is a better defence than a wall of Brass. Bulwarks and Forts have been took by stratagems, or by storming; great Castles built upon Rocks may be undermin'd, and the strongest Military Garrison may be forced to yield, lest they be starv'd: but a good Conscience cannot be starv'd, for it's a continual feast. Ahasuerus made a magnificent Feast unto the common People seven daies; but unto his Princes and Nobles, an hundred and fourscore daies, Esther 1. 4, 5. But he that daily keeps a good Conscience, he keeps a Feast every day. And notwithstanding many assaults and batteries, a good Conscience will be a shield of defence, and as a Bulwark impregnable, to secure us from the malice and mischief of

*Vid. English
Annotat.*

*Hic murens
aheneus esto
Nil conscire
sibi nulla
palescere
culpa.*

of unreasonable and malicious Adversaries. However men may be enraged against us, and accuse us falsely, and condemn us unjustly, yet if a good Conscience acquit us, we have more to make for us, than all accusations and condemnations of the worst of Enemies can make against us. Wherefore we should make it our continual endeavor to walk with that wisdom and circumspection, as we may put to silence ungodly men, who watch for our haltings, and would gladly make us an offender for a word. And a good Conscience, and a good Conversation, will make our Enemies to be ashamed. *Having a good conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ,* 1 Pet. 3. 16. Here is the great labour, and the great work, so to endeavor to order our hearts and our lives, that we may amidst all our troubles and calamities, either imminent or incumbent on us, appeal to God, the searcher of all hearts, whose curious eyes are more then ten thousand times ten thousand, even infinitely more bright than the Sun in his brightness; before whom all things are transparent; to whom day and night are all one; the darkest

*Christiani
testatum
mundo fa-
cerent, se
procul ab
omni impie-
tate, verag-
pietatis
corruptela
ab esse, quo
nomine im-
peritis su-
specti e-
rant. Calv.*

τελεσμη-
 λισμένα.
 Tradunt
 Gramma-
 tici
 τελεσμη-
 λιστα dici
 que a collo
 suspensa
 excoriantur,
 & per
 dorsum spi-
 nam, tan-
 dem resupi-
 nata fini-
 untur ut
 tota foris
 & intus
 oculis pate-
 ant. Beza.
 * Rom. 8.
 37. ὑπερ-
 νικώμεν,
 supervinci-
 mus, quoni-
 am in cruce etiam gloriamur, nedum ut, animam despondeamus. Cyr-
 Epist. 26.

darkest night hideth not from God : For
 (saith the Apostle, Heb. 4. 13.) neither
 is there any creature that is not manifest in
 his sight; but all things are naked and
 opened unto the eyes of him with whom we
 have to do. If then the Question (which
 is a very material one) be askt, What is
 that which will carry us through the
 greatest sufferings? I answer, that a God
 reconciled in Jesus Christ, a Conscience
 pacified, and a Righteous Cause, i. e.
 when we suffer for Righteousness sake,
 will make us Conquerors, and more
 than Conquerors, as the * word very
 emphatically imports, mentioned by
 the Apostle, Rom. 8. 37. ὑπερνικώμεν super-
 vincimus. Nay, in all these things we are
 more than Conquerors, through him that
 loved us.

C H A P. VII.

Where the Heart is sincere, there will be a pressing forward towards Perfection.

I Proceed to a seventh Character of a sincere Heart; and this both an Apostolical Character, and an Apostolical Practice; viz. A pressing forward towards Perfection. St. Paul propounds his own Example as a Pattern for our imitation, and what he had experimented, and known to be good experimentally, he communicates to us, and exhorts to reduce into practice. *Not as (saith he) though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ. Brethren, I count not my self to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before; I press toward the mark for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus: Let us therefore, as many as be perfect be thus minded,* Phil. 3. 12, 13, 14, 15. This

Character. 7.
A pressing
forward
towards
Perfection.
Sect. 1.

D

pro-

progressive motion *David* laies down as a sign of such who are blessed, *Psal.* 84. 6, 7. *Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well, the rain also filleth the pool: They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.* Their endeavors are indefatigable, and their motions are continued and progressive in the service of God. Hence judicious *Calvin* observes upon the place; "That the faithful recollect their strength, and ascend unto the mount of *Zion*, and are not hindred by any weariness till they behold the face of God. Our grand endeavor should be to get grace, and truth of grace; and to be diligent in searching whether we have got special and more than common grace; and whether we mistake not parts for graces. We must still be sitting, examining, and trying whether our grace be true and genuine, sincere and saving grace: And our endeavor must be continued to get growth in grace, and more accessions thereunto. If we would be preserved from apostacy and back-sliding, we must grow in grace; for growth in grace is a special preservative to keep us from falling from our steadfastness. For so saith the Apostle, 2 *Pet.* 3. 17, 18. *Te therefore, beloved,*

Ac si dice-
rent fideles
collectis
subinde vi-
ribus ascen-
dere ad
montem Z-
ion nec las-
itudine ut-
la tardari,
donec con-
spiciant
Dei faciem.
Calv in
Psal. 84.
vers. 7.

loved, seeing ye know these things before, beware, lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. A sovereign remedy to prevent the danger of Apostacy, is prescribed in the following words, vers. 18.

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. A growing Believer is a new born Christian. As new born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby,

1 Pet. 2. 2. Likewise augmentation of every particular grace is required: We must labour for true grace as to the quality of it; and as to the quantity of it we must still be adding thereunto. So saith the same Apostle, 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity:

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have need of

every grace; and the more we have of any grace in sincerity and in truth, the more we shall value it, and the more we shall beg supplies of God, and increase from him. The Apostles pray'd, Lord,

Est insignis hic locus, si quis alius vera Christiane vitae summam, descriptis illius virtutibus tum effectis spectanda præbens.
Beza.

increase our Faith. If we have any grace already really wrought in us, we shall be sensible what need we have of, and shall pray for, a continual augmentation.

sect. 2.

To instance in particulars: Have we faith? let's sift narrowly, and examine thorowly, whether our faith be a saving faith; whether it be a *justifying faith*, Rom. 5. 1. such as *works by love*, Gal. 5. 6. and *purifies the heart*, Acts 15. 9. (for this only is of the right stamp :) or whether our faith be only historical, dogmatical, and only temporary. If we search exactly, upon mature and deliberate reflections upon our selves, we shall find some failings and deficiencies in our faith: For though (questionless) the *Thessalonians* had true faith, yet *they had something lacking in their faith*. And yet they were such for whom the Apostle gave thanks to God in an especial manner, 1 *Thes.* 3. 9, 10. For (saith he) *what thanks can we render again to God for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God night and day, praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and perfect that which is lacking in your faith?* And as we should labour for more faith, so should we labour for more love, more meekness,

καλασθῶμεν
τὴν ὑπερ-
βολικὴν
ἀγάπην
(i. e.) om-
nibus amici-
ris fidem
vestram ad
huc imper-
fectam ab-
soluamus.
Beze in Loc.

.7:
ace
hall
and
ta-
we
ine
ing
ith,
5.6.
for
he-
og-
we
eli-
we
ies
efs)
hey
and
A-
pe-
ith
e to
we
and
we
ich
we
ald
k-
fs,

ness, more humility, and more self-denial. If then through the pride of our own hearts we should flatter our selves as if we had grace enough already, it's evident that we never had any grace at all in sincerity and in truth; for wherever true grace is planted in the heart, it fructifies in the life and conversation. Grace is no withered dead plant, but a living and growing plant; where the seed of grace is sown in the heart, it takes root downward, and brings forth fruit upward throughout the practice of our whole lives. "He then who labours not to grow better, begins to grow worse, as a Father saith. Though covetousness, and a greedy carking care after the World are unlawful, yet here is a lawful covetousness; for to desire more grace is a holy covetousness. To be *rapax & tenax*, i. e. to get and grasp all that one get, and not to be willing to part with any thing, are characters of covetous Earth-worms; but to be eager and greedy after increase of every grace, and when we have got grace, to be careful to the utmost to keep it, this is the only lawful kind of covetousness, recommended by the Apostle, 2 Cor. 12. 13. *Covet earnestly the best gifts.* And grace is the best gift, Christ himself only ex-

*Qui desinit
proficere,
incipit de-
ficere. Bern.*

*In desce
Stadium
exigit &
majorem
quandam
in compa-
ratis so-
vitalibus
cupiditate.
Throph.*

cepted : Gifts of Tongues , and gifts of Wisdom and Understanding, &c. are highly to be valued , but this gift of Grace is of far greater value. Grace is *Quid constitutum* ; i. e. that which constitutes a true Christian. Though Tongues, and Arts and Sciences are precious in their kind , yet many bad men may have them , and many good men may want them ; but Grace is of absolute necessity , for without it we cannot come to Heaven ; and *without holiness we shall never see the Lord*. Wherefore let us cry out for Grace, as Solomon makes mention of the *Horsecubes two Daughters*, Give, give, Prov. 30. 15. Wherefore we should not rest satisfied & contented with these measures of Grace wherunto we have at present attained, but we should make it our great business, study, and indeavor to grow from one degree of grace unto another : We must not only *follow holiness*, Heb. 12. 14. but *perfect holiness in the fear of God*, 2 Cor. 7. 1. We must strive after perfection of grace ; though we are compassed with many imperfections in this World, yet we must not allow our selves in them, but mourn for them ; and still go on in adding grace to grace here, till at length grace be swallowed up in glory ;

glory ; and we then shall attain to the end of our hope, the salvation of our immortal Souls.

C H A P. VIII.

Shewing, that where the Heart is sincere, there is a strict Watch set upon the Heart and Life, to keep us from bosome Sins.

THe eighth Character of sincerity is a Charact 8. strict Watch set upon the Heart and A strict Watch against bo- Life, against all and every bosome and some Sins. beloved Sin : Be thy sins as dear and as near as a right hand, or a right eye, they must be cut off, and pluckt out ; for so saith our Saviour, *Matth. 5. 29, 30. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee ; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee ; for it is profitable for thee that one*

Observemus in hac Christi admonitione quo serio quo fervore quamque vehementi cautione opus sit regnum Dei querentibus ut offendiculorum occasiones undique invuentes amputent. Much. in Loc.

of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell. But these words may not be understood literally, of mutilating and of dismembering of our selves, but we are to understand them as spoken by way of caution, and of strict command, not only to avoid all sins, but all manner of appearance of evil; and likewise all sorts of occasions and temptations to sin. The Psalmist gives a clear note of distinction between him whose heart is upright, and him whose heart is not upright towards God,

Neque quisquam in pietatis studio perget, nisi qui seculo se custodit et ab iniquitate sua. Col. in Lec.

Ab iniquitate mea, i.e. ad quam naturam meam proius sum, h.e. ne quia pravi admitterem aut ne secus admitterem quas ante admississem. Vatabl.

Psal. 18. 23. I was (saith he) upright before him, and I kept my self from mine iniquity. It's plain and evident from that Scripture, that every bosome sin, which David calls mine iniquity, ought in an especial manner to be watched against, and prevented; and if we be overtaken with it, we should loathe and leave it. That sin is a bosome sin which is peccatum in deliciis, a darling sin, like a Delilah in the bosome; an Agag, a ruling sin; a Gibeonite, a pretending sin: any sin that pleads with an Exceptive, as Naaman did, 2 Kings 5. 18. In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my Master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow down my self in the house

house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing. All these, and such like Apologies and pleadings, pretences and excuses for sin, must be utterly abhor'd and abandon'd altogether. Suppose thy sins may be lesser comparatively than some others, yet no sin can be so little, but it's greatly hated and abhor'd by Almighty God, and deserves his wrath to be poured down upon the Sinner unto all eternity. As for instance, suppose thou accustomest thy self to petty and lesser Oaths, frothy and vain discourse, jesting lyes, &c. yet all these have filth and guilt in them, and are odious and abominable in the sight of God, and therefore we ought to detest and utterly forsake them. One of the ancient Fathers, of the highest rank, declares his judgment, "That none ought to tell (though but one) a lye, although the telling of that one lye might save the whole World. The Reason of that Assertion is grounded upon that Proposition of eternal Truth, *We may not do evil that good may come thereof.* Ancient sins, which are of long standing and custom, such as are sins of pleasure and profit, such as suit most with the genius, complexion, and constitution of particular men, and conduce most

most to the satisfaction of carnal lusts, and to the pleasing of flesh and blood, and corrupt nature, are so far from being extenuated, as notwithstanding Custom and Antiquity, they carry a greater Aggravation with them. Thieves, Murderers, and such notorious criminal persons, cannot expect to fare a whit the better, but the worse altogether, for pleading a custom and habit in their wickedness : Wherefore then let us in good earnest loathe and detest all sins, and after loathing and detesting, leave and forsake all manner of sins; and break off both acts and habits of sinning by unfeigned repentance, and conversion to God. And let us fulfil that Prophecy by our daily practice, *Isai. 30. 22. Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven Images of Silver, and ornament of thy molten Images of Gold. Thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous Cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.* Let none presume to plead for any sin, as *Lot* pleaded for *Zoar*; *Is it not a little one? and my Soul shall live.* A little leak in a Ship, if it be neglected and not stopt up presently, may sink the Ship, and so all in the Ship may be suddenly drowned. A little Thief put into a Window may open the Door, and let in a multitude of such

such desperate Cut-throats, as may quickly destroy a whole Family. A little Penknife, a little Aul or Bodkin, may kill a man as soon as either Sword, Spear, or Gun. *Sisera* the General of *Jabin's* Forces, ran away on his feet, and so escaped the edge of the Sword in the open field, but by *Jael* he was kill'd in the Tent: for we read, *Judges* 4. 21. That *Jael*, *Heber's Wife*, took a Nail of the Tent, and took an Hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the Nail into his Temples, and fastned it into the ground, (for he was fast asleep and weary) so he died.

In our most composed and deliberate thoughts, let us consider that there is no sin so little, but (without the interposing of the merits of Christ) will damn us both Body and Soul into the nethermost Hell. There is no little God, no little Price paid to make an Attonement for Sin; and no little Hell, the place of Torments. Oh then! as thou consultest the good of thy precious Soul, lay aside altogether all manner of Apologies, pretences, pleadings, and expostulations, and all manner of hopes of obtaining any Dispensations for any one Sin, which may be comparatively lesser than some others: As for that sin which in thy account

count is not to be regarded, as if it were either a little one, or none at all, (without repentance and pardon, purchased through the Blood of Christ) thy Soul and Body may be cast into that Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone to all eternity. One of the chiefeft rank of the Roman Historians relates what *Hanno* said of *Hannibal*, "That such a little Spark might cause a great Flame. The Embers of an evil Thought may set the whole man in combustion: sinful thoughts which are *in embrione*, and not yet come to maturity, yet being not crush'd nor disallowed, may in a short tract of time bring forth evil words, and afterwards full-born actions of all sorts of abominations. As soon as *Goliath*, that insolent proud-daring Champion, was brain'd, and his Head with his own Sword sever'd from his shoulders, then forthwith the whole Army of the Philistines was routed, and utterly overthrown. If then all Champion-reigning Sins (such I call so which are darling bosome Sins) be conquered and destroyed, then all other sins which are of more than ordinary incurfion, will the sooner be vanquished and subdued. We read that when the King of Syria went to joyn battle against *Ahab* King of Israel,

*Parvus hic
ignis inced-
dum ingens
excitetur.
I. iv.*

rael, 2 Kings 22. 31. that he gave strict command to his thirty and two Captains, that had rule over his Chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the King of Israel. Now if the Question be made, Why was the battle principally design'd against the King of Israel? The Answer is at hand, Because the King of Israel was the worst Enemy, and molthating, and most hated. Although in our spiritual warfare we must valiantly encounter and fight against every sin, yet in an especial manner we must with renewed strength fight against all bosome sins; because the more they are delighted in, and hugg'd in the bosome, they prove more milchievous; as Vipers and Serpents, who being once received into the bosome, suddenly destroy those who give them entertainment. Questionless every sin is of a poisonous and destructive nature; yet a beloved sin carries with it more aggravating circumstances, and so proves more mischievous and destructive; as may be abundantly evidenced by the sad consequences thereof, as daily experience witnesseth abundantly.

For a further illustration of the Assertion, by a plain and obvious similitude: *Sect. 3.*
Would any man, though of an ordinary capacity,

capacity, harbour Vipers, Adders, Scorpions, Toads, and such like noxious and hurtful creatures in his house? would any entertain such kind of dangerous creatures in his bed, and lay them in his bosome, and so venture to sleep with them? None can easily imagine that any there are who are so far sequestred from common sense and reason, as to venture to give a bosome reception to such kind of creatures which are offensive and destructive unto mankind. The chiefest of the Heathen Orators tells us, "That naturally all creatures must defend their life and body, and avoid all those things which are hurtful. Wherefore let's consider seriously, and after mature deliberation we shall confess, that any beloved Sin is worse than any Viper, Scorpion, Adder, or Toad in the bosome; and whilst thou embracest and pleakest thy self in any beloved Sin, thou takest a ready course to destroy both thy Body and Soul. Wherefore, Oh Christian! if thou hast any love, any regard or commiseration of thy immortal and heavenly-born being Soul, give not thy self the least allowance or dispensation in any beloved Sin: for if thou pleadest for thy Sins, thou art the greatest Enemy to thy own Soul, Let not

*Principio
generi ani-
mantium
omni est a
naturâ tri-
butum, ut
se, vitam
corpusque
tueatur, de-
clinatque
ea, que vo-
citur vi-
deantur.
Cic. off.
lib. 1.*

not any voluptuous man plead for his pleasures and sensual delights ; let not any unchaste man plead for his Strumpet , or for any wanton lascivious carriage ; let not any vain frothy Jester and Scoffer plead for any wittily contriv'd lye, collusion, or any abusive carriage ; let not any Tradesman excuse his lying, and overreaching in his Trade, and vending of sophisticated wares, and refuse commodities ; let him not flatter himself with vain pretences, as if his lying, equivocating, and juggling, would much conduce to his profit ; let him not pretend that he cannot keep open shop, and maintain his family ; and if he should once leave his lying, and swearing, and couzening, his family would be utterly undone. All such kind of pleadings are odious and abominable in the sight of God. Neither Antiquity nor Custom, nor pleasure nor profit will excuse thee in the least, nor relieve thee before the impartial Tribunal of Jesus Christ : When thou shalt appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, then all sinful pleadings, and all vain Apologies, will be so far from extenuating or lessening thy sins at that great day, as that they will aggravate them both as to the filth and guilt of them. And then Christ will

Bishop ush-
er late Pri-
mate of Ire-
land.

will pronounce against thee that dreadful sentence of condemnation. We read *Matth. 25.* that sins of omissions could not in the least excuse them: And some in an especial manner have bewail'd *their sins of omission*; how then shall the commissions of scandalous sins excuse thee at that great day of account; and amongst other sins, such as are beloved, bosome and customary sins, most pleasing to flesh and blood; these will aggravate both thy sins and thy punishments at the day of Judgment.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

A desire and universal endeavour against all and every Sin, is a Character of a sincere Heart, and it's accompanied with the Practice of all Duties.

THe ninth Character of sincerity consists in a desire universally extensive, and an equal endeavour against all manner and all sorts of Sins, and a desire and endeavor as extensive to yield obedience unto all Command, and to practice all Duties.

*Charact. 9.
A desire
and endeavour
against
all Sins,
and for the
practice of
all Duties.
Sect. I.*

The desire and endeavour must be extensive against all manner of all sins. There must be a desire and endeavour to refrain from every evil way; and not only from one sin, but from all sins of all sorts, and all manner of sizes; though as considered comparatively they may not be pleaded for at all, (though less than others) but they must be utterly abandoned and forsaken, as well as others of a greater filth and guilt. Thus the Psalmist professeth, *Psal. 119. 101. I have*

*The desire
and endeavour
must
be extensive
against
all sins.*

have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep thy word. By feet we are to understand, the whole course of our lives and conversations in a comprehensive sense, taking in the whole duty of man. And that we may keep the Word of God, and keep close to his Statutes, we must wage war against every sin, and * *refrain our feet from every evil way*. There must then of necessity be an universal loathing, and an universal leaving of every sin; for in every sin, even in such as some call a *peccadillo*, there is poison and venome, for which there is no other Antidote but the Blood of Jesus Christ. There is no sin which is in its own nature venial, unless the Blood of Christ make it so. Wherefore that commonly received distinction amongst Papists, of *venial* and *mortal sins*, is to be discarded altogether, as a rotten distinction: The Papists may rather, according to their own practice, call sins venial, because they set sins to sale, and grant Indulgences for money; and so hope to make a good Market of Peoples bad lives, thereby intending to enrich the Popes Coffers, and the Priests Purse. But they in the mean time presumptuously derogate from the Merits of Jesus Christ, by presumptuously ar-

roga-

* Significat
se bellum
indixisse
omnibus vi-
tiis, ut se
Deo in ob-
sequium de-
deret. Calv.

rogating to themselves a power of forgiving of sins, upon the payment of moneys for Indulgences. Against them may be justly retorted the same censure which the Apostle pronounced against *Simon Magus*, Acts 8. 20. for offering of money: *Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.* As for Popish Pardons and Indulgences, both Givers and Takers are abominable, because they undervalue the pardoning Mercy of God in Jesus Christ. It's an undoubted sign of all those who love God, *to hate evil.* So saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 97. 10. Ye that love the Lord, hate evil.* And this hatred must be an universal hatred of all manner of sins, without exception; and it must be a perfect and irreconcilable hatred. Deadly fewds (such as Chronicles mention) between Family and Family, were barbarous and abominable, and tended to the utter subversion of many Families: But here, a deadly fewd is lawful; *i. e.* to perpetuate our hatred and enmity against all manner of sins and corruptions. *David* declares his utter hatred and indignation against all the Enemies of God, *Psal. 139. 23, 24. I hate them; O Lord, that hate thee. And am not I*
E 2 *grieved*

grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies. David hated their sins rather than their persons; though he loved their persons, yet as they were God's enemies, for their notorious rebellions against God, he hated them with a perfect hatred. It's an universal charge enjoyn'd by the Apostle, *Rom. 12. 9.* to all without exception, *Abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good.* Not only one Cockatrice, but all the breed of Cockatrices are of a poisonous and destructive nature, and mischievous to mankind, and therefore not only such as come to maturity, but those also which are in the Egg ought to be destroyed. So every sin is of a poisonous and mischievous nature, and therefore ought to be stifled in the first conception, and be prevented from proceeding to any ripeness. For any Woman to stifle and destroy the fruit of her womb (though the conception be very early) is abominable murder in the sight of God; and if such courses be practised, they tend to the rooting out a succession of all mankind: But as for all manner of sins and wickedness, though newly committed, and gone no further then a thought, yet that

that very evil thought should be checkt and disallowed. The School-men have coyn'd quaint notions, and amongst them are mention'd *motus primo primi*; let them not mince nor extenuate sins by such Cob-web distinctions; for those beginnings, (to speak more plainly) which by them are call'd *primo primi*, are sinful; those first risings and motions, as sinful, are to be destroyed, mourned for, and never suffered to proceed to any further maturity.

2. As there must be a refraining and *Sect. 2.*
abstaining from all manner of sins, so *2. An endeavour to*
there must be an endeavour to obey all *practise all*
Commands, and practise all Duties. *Gods com-*
Hereupon the Psalmist professeth, *Psalm*

119. 6. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments.

It is an infallible and undoubted sign of a gracious heart, neither to divide in duties nor in commands; neither to make exceptions and distinctions, as if one grace was to be got, and not another. Neither may we plead a dispensation from any duty, whether it be commanded in the first or second Table. For instance, whoever he be that pretends a strict observation of the Sabbath day (I mean only the Lords day Sabbath) and pretends a hatred of swearing

and lying, and of all manner of Idolatry, and yet this man is dishonest and unjust in his dealings, he is without doubt an errand Hypocrite; and likewise whoever he be that pretends to deal justly and uprightly between man and man, and to pay every one his own, (which is both necessary and commendable) and yet this man makes no conscience at all of observing the Lords day, nor of keeping his Word or Oath, nor of using the Name of God with reverence, such a man is but a meer formalist, and a stranger to the power of godliness: For the same God who commands one duty commands another, and laies an equal obligation to yield ready and chearful obedience unto both Tables. For the whole Law of God is copulative, and one Commandment is joyn'd to another as a link of the same golden Chain. Hence it appears in *Deuteronomy*, Deut. 5. 18, 19, 20, 21. that there is a concatenation and connexion between all the Commandments of God. *Neither shalt thou commit adultery, neither shalt thou steal, neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbour, neither shalt thou desire thy neighbours wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbours house, his field, or his man-servant, or his maid-servant,*
his

*Lex Dei est
una tota co-
pulative.
Illyric.*

his ox or his ass, or anything that is thy
 neighbours. From which Scriptures we
 conclude, That there ought to be an
 equal regard unto one Commandment
 as well as another; for there is one only
 holy Lord God, who commands one
 Commandment in the Decalogue as well
 as an other. This was the very trade,
 or grand employment which St. Paul did
 drive, *Act: 24. 16. To keep a conscience
 void of offence, towards God and towards
 man.* The Apostle did not shift and put
 off this grand negotiation from himself,
 as if he were unconcern'd, and therefore
 left it to others; but it's said, *herein do
 I exercise my self.* Neither did the A-
 postle sit fast and loose, and (as we say)
 exercise himself by fits and starts only,
 but he made it his business, exercise and
 employment; for it's said, *alwaies.* Nei-
 ther will any sort of conscience, at a ven-
 ture, serve the turn; because there are
 many bad consciences: but the Apostle
 only values and exerciseth a conscience
 void of offence. And such a conscience,
 in its extent and latitude, is a
 or an infallible note of the sincerity of
 that heart, which in the Apostles lan-
 guage, *keeps a conscience void of offence,
 toward God and toward men.* Farther
 the said Apostle makes mention of three

*Quicquid
 propter eum
 fit, equali-
 ter fit.*

*ἐν τῷ
 δὲ τοῦ
 ἀνδ.*

*ἡ ἀν-
 ῖς.*

*ἀσθεν-
 ῶσα συνί-
 σται.*

significant Adverbs, which comprehend
 the whole duty of man; *viz. soberly,*
righteously, and godly. As to all com-
 mands, and to all sorts of duties com-
 manded in the Word of God, we must
 make it our business to manifest our
 thorow and impartial obedience, not
 picking and chusing, as if when we had
 perform'd an easier duty, then we might
 obtain a dispensation for a greater com-
 mandment. But all such manner of
 halving and dividing is odious and abo-
 minable in the sight of Almighty God;
 for every divided heart is *faulty*, as the
 Prophet saith, *Hof. 10. 2. Their heart is*
divided, therefore they shall be found
faulty. Wherefore Universality of the
 subject, *the whole man*, which in a com-
 prehensive acceptation takes in all the
 members of the Body, and faculties of
 the Soul, Universality of the object,
the whole Law, and Universality of *time*
and place, are essentially requisite to the
 compleating of the obedience of every
 sincere hearted Christian. This Cha-
 racter searcheth very near the heart;
 and he who hath it, without all question
 is a sincere hearted man. By this Cha-
 racter let us in an especial manner try
 our selves; even by the universality of
 our hatred of all manner of sins, and by
 the

the universality of our obedience unto all God's commands; and by the universality of our endeavours to grow in every grace. Universality is both a divisive and constitutive difference, for it distinguisheth a half nominal and formal outside Christian, from a sincere Christian; and it constitutes a Child of God.

C H A P. X.

Where the Heart is upright with God, it is without guile and hypocrisie.

THe tenth Character of sincerity, is Charact. 10. A spirit without guile. Sect. I. a spirit without guile and hypocrisie. Nathanael had this testimony from Christ, *John 1. 47. Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.* And to have a spirit without guile, is that grand distinguishing Character which the Psalmist appropriates to a blessed man, *Psal. 32. 1, 2. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.* Who are they who are thus

thus blessed? Such whose sins are forgiven, and not imputed to them. And who are they whose sins are forgiven, and not imputed to them? Such in whose spirit there is no guile. Only those who are pure in heart shall see God. Purity of heart is one of those transcendent Beatitudes mention'd in our Saviours Sermon upon the Mount, *Matth. 5. 8. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* They are said to be pure, in opposition to profaneness; and pure in heart, in opposition to hypocrisie. They only shall be partakers of the blessed Vision, whose hearts are pure, (*i. e.*) sincere with God. True Believers, whose hearts are upright, and their lives holy, they shall see some manifestations of God by his Word, and by his Providences; and they shall see the footsteps and out-goings of God in the Sanctuary. But what they see here, is but little in comparison of what they shall see and enjoy in glory. For (saith the Apostle, *1 Cor. 13. 12.*) *we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

Scit. 2. Every upright person is compounded of three significant words, which comprehend the whole duty of integrity:
And

And they are simplicity, singleness, and sincerity.

The first word is simplicity; and this ^{1. Simplicity.} is opposite to a double heart, and to such a heart as is usually call'd, *a heart and a heart*. This simplicity of the heart was a ground of the Apostles rejoycing, and of all true Believers: For saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 1. 12. *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity, &c.* ^{ἐν ἀπλότητι.} And it's the high commendation ascrib'd to the Children of Zebulun, 1 Chron. 12. 33. *that they were not of a double heart.* St. James stamps a brand of infamy upon a double minded man, in that he is *unstable in all his waies*, ^{ἀκαταστάτος.} James 1. 8. He is unfixt, unplaced, and ^{πρ.} so unsettled, as you know not what to judg of him, nor (as we use to say) where to find him: A man may as soon hold the wind in his hand, as hold fast an unstable man.

A second word is singleness: Now ^{2. Singleness.} singleness and uprightness differ only in the sound of the name pronounced; they agree in the same sense altogether, as being of a synonymous signification. Of this singleness of heart we have a clear evidence of the Primitive Converts, Acts 2. 46. *They continued daily with one accord in the Temple, and break-* ^{ἐν ἀρελότητι καὶ ὁμοθυμαδόν.} *ing* ^{ᾠδῶν.}

ing bread from house to house, and eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God. It's the observation of judicious Mr. Calvin upon the place, That simplicity of heart, and praising of God, are joyn'd together: And the reason he gives is this; "Because in praising of God, there cannot be simplicity of heart, unless it consist in all the parts of our lives, &c. This single and undivided heart is highly esteem'd of in the sight of God: Wherefore we are commanded to *turn unto the Lord with all our hearts*, Joel 2. 12. And the Psalmist professeth, Psal. 119. 10. *With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.* An entire, single, one heart, are all one in sense; and such a one only obtains acceptance in the sight of God, the searcher of all hearts.

Quia in
laudando
Deo non
potest esse
cordis sim-
plicitas nisi
consistat in
omnibus vi-
tae partibus,
ideo certum
est ejus fieri
mentionem
hoc sensu
quod fideles
eam ubique
coluerint.
Calv. in
Loc.

3. Sincere-
rity.
2 Cor. 1. 12.
ἐν ἀληθεί-
ᾳ Θεοῦ.
Sinceras
sine cerâ.

A third word is *godly sincerity*; so I call it, because it's so call'd by the Apostle; *godly sincerity*, or the sincerity of God. Hereby is necessarily to be infer'd, that we must not only be sincere in all that we do towards men, but in all that we do towards God. Simplicity and godly sincerity are joyn'd together by the Apostle, and they cannot be parted asunder. The Apostle likewise

prays

prays for the Philippians, Phil. I. 10. That ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere, and without offence till the day of Christ. In this place there are two significant words to be explained; one is, *sincere*: *εὐλαβής* in the Original, and according to the received Etymology, derived from *ἥλιος*, *sol*, and *κρίνω*, *judico*: And this is as (most say) an allusion to the practise of Eagles, who turn the faces of their young ones to look upwards towards the Sun, and if they cannot behold the Sun, they throw them down as spurious, and not of the breed of Eagles. Thus far this allusion may be improved, That all our thoughts, words and actions, should be so genuine, and so rightly ordered, as they may behold the Sun of Righteousness, and be approved of by Almighty God. Another word to be opened in that Text, is *inoffensive*; in the Original it's *ἀπερόκωποι*: *αποκ. Qui* (*i. e.*) We should so look to our steps *inoffenso* as that we may not stumble; and we *cursu per-* should walk so prudently, as we may *git. Qui* neither give nor take offence. This *non posuit* inoffensive walking the Apostle enjoins in *offendi quæ* the extent and latitude of it, I Cor. 10. 32. *nusquam* Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor *offendat,* to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God. The same Apostle gives in special charge to

to the *Corinthians*, 2 Cor. 6. 1. *We then as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.* And how must they evidence their not receiving the grace of God in vain? He adds *verse 3. Giving no offence in any thing, that the Gospel be not blamed.* All Ministers, in an equal manner, ought to keep up the honour of their Ministry, by a faithful and diligent discharge of their duty, and by the holiness of their lives and converstations. Many foul-mouth'd rash Censurers are so ignorant, as not to distinguish between the Ministers and Ministry, and therefore blame the whole Ministry for the default of some particular Ministers: Wherefore Ministers and People, especially such as are Professors of Religion, must labour to walk so unblamably, as they may (what in them lies) preserve the Reputation and Honour of the Gospel-Ministry. Inoffensive and circumspect walking, is the wisest walking. See (saith the Apostle, *Ephes. 5. 15.*) *how circumspectly you walk.* Not only the matter, but the manner is required; and this precise walking is the wisest walking. *Not as fools, but as wise.* They who walk in dissolute courses, and live without God in the World, they are the fools, and

πὸς ὁμοί-
ως περ-
παῖντε.

and so will be found to be another day :
 And an especial effect of circumspect
 wise walking consists in redeeming of
 time. *Redeeming the time, because the*
daies are evil, Ephes. 5. 10. He then
 whose heart is without guile, evidenceth
 it so to be in the integrity of his life and
 conversation ; as a good tree is known
 by the good fruits which it bears. And
 this upright walking is the only sure and
 safe walking ; but the contrary thereof
 is alwaies accompanied with variety of
 dangers and mischiefs : As *Solomon* saith,
Prov. 10. 9. He that walketh uprightly,
walketh surely ; but he that perverteth his
waies shall be known.

C H A P. XI.

Of Mortification of the Deeds of
the Body.

Charact. II.
Mortifica-
tion of the
Deeds of
the Body.
Sect. I.

THE eleventh Character of a sincere Heart, is Mortification of the Deeds of the Body; *i. e.* all manner of Lusts, and the evil fruits of corrupt nature. Carnal lusts, and all the works of the flesh must be mortified. And that we may the better know what they are, the Apostle gives us a large Catalogue of the works of the flesh, *Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.* Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, and such like. Our duty is to confer the strength of our best endeavours, to set upon the practice of mortification of all those fore-mentioned, and not of those only, but of all other sins: For not only one particular member, not only one particular act, not only one particular affection or faculty must be mortified, but the habit, nature,

nature, and constitution, even the whole body of sin must be mortified. Every sin must have a mortifying blow, and not only be left half dead, but dead altogether. I have heard an observation made of two eminently Learned and Valiant Champions of the Truth, that one of them fought so long with his Adversary, that he conquer'd and slew him in his Disputations; the other did not only slay his Adversary, but buried him. Thus must we deal with every sin; our endeavour must be to destroy all our sins utterly, to kill and bury them, that so they may never rise against us in this World to our shame, nor in the World to come to our condemnation. Wherever we find the cursed fruits of sin, we must utterly destroy them; neither must sin only be destroyed in the fruits, but in the roots also: both root and branch must be pluckt up. When the plague of Leprosie was spread in any house, God gave a special command, *That the Priest should break down the house, and the stones of it, and the timber thereof, and all the mortar of the house.* Sin is a spiritual infectious Leprosie; and wherever it is, it ought to be rooted out. The mortar of a Leprous house may not be made use of for daubing of any house; no

F more

Dr. Job.
Reynolds,
and Dr.
Guil. Hbb.
taker.

Levit. 14.

45.

more may any sin be mingled in the worship of God. We read of the barbarous cruelty of *Pilate*, Luke 13. 1. who mingled the blood of the Galileans with their sacrifices. But it's most just for God to reject all our services, and destroy us, when we mingle our sins, vain fancies, and sinful inventions, with the purity of his worship. *Nadab* and *Abihu* are standing examples and warning-pieces against offering strange fire unto the Lord. And that is strange fire which is after our will-worship, and devised by our own brains, and not according to divine Institution. We have the History upon record, Lev. 10. 1. *And Nadab and Abihu the sons of Aaron took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. We may not offer to God the lame and the blind. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy Governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person, saith the Lord of hosts? As for all those who put such a high affront and indignity upon God, as to offer the refuse*

Mal. 1. 8.

fulse and worst of their services, (as if they thought any good enough for him) they incur that dreadful curse, *Mal. i. 14.* But cursed be the deceiver, who hath in his flock a male, and voweth and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing; for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my Name is dreadful amongst the Heathen. If then we would offer any acceptable sacrifice unto God, we must mortifie our sins and corruptions, and offer unto God the best of our services: *the male in the flock*, and the best male.

Although the Lord commanded the *Sect. 2.* sacrifice of Bulls and Rams, &c. yet he rejected the sacrifices of the Jews, and had no respect to their persons, nor to their sacrifices. Thus the Lord expostulates the case with them, *Isai. i. 12, 13.* When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? And the Lord forbids them to bring such kind of sacrifices, *verse 13.* Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me.

Quest. But might not they truly have replied, that *incense, oblations, sacrifices, &c.* were all of Divine institution? God commanded them all, why then should not they yield obedience to the command accordingly?

F 2

Answ.

Ans. I answer, They were commanded to offer sacrifice; but they offered sacrifice in a wrong manner: For in every service which we perform to God, we should do it in a right manner, and for a right end; not only the action it self, but the manner of performing it must be regarded. The Jews rested only in the Ceremonial service, and in the multitude of external sacrifices, having no regard at all to their own hearts and lives: these they should have offered up to God pure and holy; but their hearts were exceeding foul, and their hands were full of blood; therefore God rejected both their persons and their sacrifices. For thus saith the Lord, *verse 15. When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood.* First then before we can offer any acceptable sacrifice unto God, we must set upon the practice of mortification and slaughter of all our sins. Wherefore the special charge of the Apostle is, *Col. 3. 5. Mortifie therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.* Not a lust may be spared; All carnal lusts may

be compared to those brats of *Babylon*, which are appointed for utter destruction. To this purpose we may apply that of the Psalmist, *Psal. 137. 8, 9. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast rewarded us. Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.*

Quest. Some make it a Question, (though good Christians make no Question of it at all) Whether self-murder be lawful?

Ans. For Answer: It's murder in the highest degree, and an apparent breach of the sixth Commandment, *Thou shalt do no murder.* As no murder should be committed against another, much less against a mans self: But for every one of us to slay our sins, and destroy our corruptions, is no self-murder; for then a Christian lives best of all, when he hath slain his sins and corruptions. We must make it our daily prayer, that God would destroy our sins, and save our Souls. Every sin we must account a *Benhadad*, design'd for destruction. Therefore *Benhadad* being appointed by God for utter destruction, *Ahab* by sparing him brought inevitable ruine upon himself and his people. For

thus saith the man of God to *Ahab*, by the word of the Lord, *1 Kings 20. 42.* *Because thou hast let go out of thy hand a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.* If then we give quarter to any one sin, and hug it in our bosomes, we take a speedy course to destroy our own Souls; for by shewing foolish pity to spare any one sin, we prove cruel to our precious Souls; we our selves being the greatest enemies to our selves.

sect. 3. Farther, we must take special cognizance of such sins as either are secret, unknown to any man, or else such as come not within the verge of the punishment of the Law of man; as wanton and amorous glances, vain frothy discourse, and covetousness, on which God sets a peculiar brand of infamy, *Col. 3. 5.* and calls it *Idolatry*. Now *Idolatry* is a sin of a high aggravation, for it endeavors to rob God of his honour, and to ascribe that honour and glory to Mammon, and worldly rich men, which is only due to the eternal Creator, *God blessed for ever.* Likewise we must observe what a wide difference the Apostle makes between carnal living, and the practice of mortification; the difference is

is as great, as between life and death, and so are the different effects and issues of both. For saith the Apostle, *Rom. 8. 13. If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, ye shall live.* We read of that glorious Victory which the Lord wrought for Israel against *Amalek*, an inveterate enemy; after this Victory was obtained, we read that *Moses built an Altar, and called the name of it Jehovah Nissi; for he said, because the Lord hath sworn, that he will have war with Amalek from generation to generation, Exod. 17. 15, 16.*

Quest. The Question may be askt, Why was war to be made and continued from generation to generation against *Amalek*?

Ans. The Answer is obvious; they were cruel and bloody Enemies, destitute of all manner of mercy, and bowels of compassion, and therefore God chargeth *Moses* to make a Record of this signal Deliverance. *And the Lord said unto Moses, write this for a memorial in a Book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua; for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under Heaven.*

Quest. But it will be further askt, Wherein consisted the particular sin of *Amalek*?

Ans. For Answer, Moses gives a full relation, Deut. 25. 17, 18, 19. Remember what Amalek did unto thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint; and he feared not God. Therefore it shall be when the Lord thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under Heaven; thou shalt not forget it. As war by Gods appointment should be waged against Amalek, so it's the appointment of God that we should continue fighting and warring against our sins and corruptions. In this case onely it's lawful to perpetuate a deadly feud, and remain alwaies implacable and irreconcilable against all our sins; we must not make the least peace, nor admit of any parly for peace for any sin, though it be of long standing, custom and antiquity, and pleasing to flesh and blood.

To what hath been mentioned, I will add for further explication two significant words; viz. *ἡσυχία* and *δουλοῦμαι*, of which the Apostle makes an emphatical mention, 1 Cor. 9. 27. *But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection;*

tion; lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away. The first word is *καταμαζω*, rendered, I keep under my body: but there lies in the word a greater emphasis; for the word signifies to beat the body black and blue; and further yet in the propriety of the word, it signifies * to beat under the eye, and to leave a mark there of redness and blueness. The other word is *δουλωσας*, and this properly signifies, to bring into subjection: it's a Metaphor took from Oxen, whom we bring under the yoke; or from any such Creatures whom we enslave or captivate, and bring them into subjection, for our use and service. We should then endeavor so to bring down our bodies, and subdue them, as to make them serviceable to our souls, and subject and obedient to the yoke of Christ; if so, we have well learn'd the Doctrine of Mortification. A learned moral Heathen will condemn many dissolute livers, who call themselves Christians, and yet live without God in the world: "I am (saith Seneca) greater, and born to greater things, than to be a slave to my body. Every Drunkard is a slave to his Cups, and every Whoremonger a slave to his Harlot, and every covetous Worldling

* *καταμαζω*
est pars faciei que oculis est subiecta, contuendo subactum, seu dejectum premo. Beza.

is

is a slave to his Mammon : But our design must not be to enslave our Souls to our Bodies ; but the design which we drive, must be to make our Bodies serviceable to our Souls. It was an excellent saying of *Ephrem Syrus*, who flourished in the third Century after Christ ; “ He
“ that feasts his Body, and starves his
“ Soul, is like him that feasts his Slave,
“ and starves his Wife.

CHAP.

C H A P. XII.

Vivification of the Fruits of the Spirit is a Character of a sincere Heart.

THe twelfth and last Character of sincerity (which I shall only mention) is, The Vivification of the Fruits of the Spirit. After mortification of the deeds of the Body, there must necessarily fol-

Charact. 12. Vivification of the fruits of the Spirit. Sect. I.

low, the Vivification of the Fruits of the Spirit; for where Christ dwells in a Soul by faith, and by the influence of his grace, *the Body is dead, (as the Apostle saith, Rom. 8. 10.) because of sin; but the spirit is life, because of righteousness.* A

Learned and Judicious Writer thus interprets that Scripture;

“Although (saith he) sin condemns us to death, so far as the remainders of corrupt nature, and the vitiosity thereof remains in us, yet the Spirit is Conquerour:

“wherefore notwithstanding our primitive corruption, one spark of the Spirit

Quamvis peccatum mortis nos adjuicet quatenus in nobis remanet prima nature vitiosisibus spiritum tamen Dei esse victore nec obstare quod tantum primitiis donati sumus quia vel una eius scintilla vi æ semen est. Calv. in Loc.

“ of

“of God is a seed of life to us, though
 “in this world we receive only the first-
 “fruits thereof. All those who by nature are dead in trespasses and sins, can never be brought from death to life, and from the state of nature into the state of grace, any other way but by the quickning virtue of Jesus Christ. For saith the Apostle, *You hath he quickned, who were dead in your trespasses and sins.* Such as are now (through grace) in a state of regeneracy, were in their natural condition in a state of unregeneracy; and such who are now quickned, were formerly in a dead condition: As it's said of the converted Prodigal in the Parable, *Luke 15. 32. He was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.* The Apostle discovers the great difference between the state of regeneracy and unregeneracy, (and the difference is great, as great as the difference between life and death.) Let's diligently review the words of the Apostle, *Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this World, according to the Prince of the power of the Air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we had our conversatton in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires (or wills) of*
 the

Ephes. 2.

20 3.

Sect. 2. Characters of a sincere Heart. 93

the flesh, and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. τὰ δὲ σαρκὸς
κατὰ τὴν
οὐσίαν.

And what is the sole moving cause of all? it followeth vers. 4, 5. But God who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickned us together with Christ; by grace ye are saved. συνζωοποίησεν.
ἐν χάριτι.

Quest. But the Question may be askt, Sect. 2. How may such who are regenerated and quickned by Christ, be distinguished from such who are unregenerate, and yet dead in their trespasses and sins?

Ans. I Answer, as a tree may be known by its fruits which it bears; i. e. a good tree, by good fruits; and a bad tree, by bad fruits; so may regenerate be distinguished from unregenerate: unregenerate bring forth the fruits of the flesh, as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, &c. Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. before mentioned; but regenerate persons bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. St. Paul gives us a double Catalogue; one is short, but very comprehensive, Ephes. 5. 9. The fruit of the spirit is in all goodness, righteousness and truth. The other is a large Catalogue, Gal. 5. 22, 23. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no Law. If then

then the fruits of the Spirit exert and manifest themselves in the holiness of our lives and conversations, it's an infallible sign of our vivification by the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

By those twelve forementioned Characters of a sincere Heart, we may and must put our selves upon a strict search and enquiry, whether our hearts be sincere and upright towards God? We must then with all diligence and impartiality make a strict search into our hearts; we must ask, *What have I done?* Jer. 8. 6. we must *commune with our own hearts*, Psal. 4. 4. and (as the Church resolves, Lam. 3. 40.) *Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.* And I am persuaded, that if we have one of those Characters forementioned in sincerity and in truth, we have the rest; for they are all Links of one and the same golden Chain, and there's such a concatenation between them, as one cannot be separated from another.

C H A P. XIII.

*Containing the Comforts pertaining
to sincere Christians in their Lives
in this World.*

HAVING laid down those twelve fore-mentioned Characters and Signs of Sincerity, I thence infer this Conclusion, That it's the grand Duty incumbent upon us all, and every one in particular, to propound the Question (as in the presence of God) to his own Soul, Am I a sincere-hearted Christian, yea or no? Let us with deliberate thoughts consider of those twelve above-named Signs and Marks of Sincerity, and examine our selves by them accordingly : herein consists the grand Labour and Work, to busie our selves with all frequent and serious self-reflections, and heart-examinations ; and let us as one man, every one particularly, propound the Question (as in the presence of God) to his own Soul, saying, Is my heart sincere and upright towards God? There are many needless Questions propounded, which

which gender strife, and it were better that they had been buried in silence altogether; but here is the Question worthy of our studying and stating, *viz.* Whether our hearts stand sincere towards God? As for all those whose hearts are without guile, as *Nathanael's* was, *John* 1. 47. who have truth in the inward parts, (as God requires, *Psal.* 37. 6.) who are men after God's own heart, (as *David* was) whose hearts are perfect with God, as *Hezekiah*, *Asa*, and *Jehoshaphat* were, these notwithstanding infirmities incident to human nature, shall find the comfort and benefit of their uprightness and sincerity in their lives, and in their deaths, and after death to all eternity.

Sincere persons receive comfort in their lives.

Sincere-hearted Christians receive comfort in their lives: Although God's dear Children meet with variety of sore and grievous afflictions in this present World, and encounter with many temptations, and great troubles and vexations, insomuch as they are the very *Butt* and *Mark* against which their implacable Enemies shoot their keenest and sharpest Arrows, poisoned and destructive: yet notwithstanding all their sufferings, a good God, a good Cause, and a good Conscience, will carry them chearfully through

through all their troubles, and abundantly quiet and support their spirits. And the least glimpse of God's reconciled countenance in Christ, will infinitely compensate for all the frowns and fury of implacable Adversaries; inward comforts will make amends for outward troubles. A good Conscience, like *Abimeaz*, will bring good tidings; or like a *Halcyon*, (as is said) appears in a storm, as an emblem of a calm approaching. Or a good Conscience may resemble *Noah's Dove*, which brought an Olive-leaf in her mouth, in token that the waters were abated. As *Aaron's Rod* swallowed up all the Rods of the Magicians; so a pacified Conscience, by the consolations of God's spirit, will swallow up all manner of troubles and vexations whatsoever. A sincere heart, and the answer of a good conscience, and the apprehension of God's reconciled countenance in the face of Christ, will compose and quiet our spirits, and becalm and make them sedate, and settle all manner of fluctuating and tumultuating thoughts. To this purpose I'll cite an excellent passage of *St. Augustine*.

"* My thoughts (saith he) are torn in pieces with variety of tumults, even
 "my inward bowels are torn in pieces,

* *Tumultus
 osis varie-
 tationis di-
 laniantur
 cogitationes
 mea, intima
 viscera a-
 nima, mea
 donec late
 confusum
 purgatus &
 liquidus
 gignatur
 in. Aug.
 conf. l.
 c. 29.*

G

"until

“ until I make haste to be purged , and
 “ and melted with the fire of thy love.
 One only word spoken by Christ, suddenly becalm'd a rough and tempestuous Sea ; for when the Disciples were afraid, *Matth. 8. 26. Christ arose, and rebuked the Winds and the Sea , and there was a great calm.* And amidst variety of storms and tempests, even such winds which blow fiercer than that called *Ex-roclydon* , *Acts 27. 17.* Christ can make all still: and so can he amidst the greatest inward and sharpest storms of Christians (when they are at their wits end , and know not what to do) Christ (I say) can speak a word of peace unto their Souls, saying, *Son, or Daughter, be of good comfort, all thy sins are forgiven thee.* Upon the hearing of such a gracious word, there will follow a marvelous tranquility and serenity upon the spirit.

sect. 2. It cannot be denied (though it ought to be bewailed) but the best of Saints here on earth have their spots and failings ; for they are encompassed in this World with a body of sin and corruption, yet they are sensible of, and mourn for their spots and failings, (for they are their sorrow, and their heavy burthen.) They do not willingly allow themselves in any sin, nor willingly de-
 part

part from any command. Sin in a Child of God is a torment to him, like a broken leg, or a broken tooth; it's matter of dolour and anguish to him. Sin in a Child of God, is like Garbidge thrown into a running stream, it is still running and purging away of all manner of filth and impurity. But sin in an unregenerate man is like Garbidge thrown into a standing pond, there it abides, and sends forth a loathsome and stinking savour. However, all those whose hearts are upright with God, make it their continual employment to search their hearts, and to wash and cleanse them: hereupon after searching of their hearts, they learn to know them better; and they know more evil by themselves than all the World can tell them of; hence follows heart-compunction, sighing and mourning. And being thus apprehensive of their own impotency and unworthiness, and forlorn condition, they make haste to Christ, and implore his gracious assistance; and beseech him to cleanse them, and make them white in his Blood. Wherefore as often as that inveterate enemy Satan, and all malicious and ungodly men, the Devils instruments, prefer large Bills of Accusations and false Indictments against the

Saints, they make their appeal to the righteous Judge of Heaven and Earth, who alwaies judgeth righteously. The Apostle makes an expostulation, and gives an answer thereunto every way satisfactory, *Rom. 8. 33, 34. Who shall lay anything to the charge of Gods elect? it is God that justifieth.* The most bitter Accusations, and most violent Persecutions of them all are altogether insignificant, and of no effect, force or vertue, against any of those whom God justifies: for Gods justification and discharge will fully acquit and exonerate us, and save us harmless and indemnified against all the demands, charges, suggestions, and libels made against us by the worst of Enemies. For it follows in the next words; *Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.* The frequent and serious meditation of these things, abundantly support and comfort the godly in their Pilgrimage on Earth. Albeit the best of Gods children meet with conflicts and antipathies, and are exercised in combats against the Flesh, the Devil, and the World, those spiritual Enemies of their Salvation, yet through the strength of Christ they shall

return with Trophies of Victory; and by experience they shall find the flesh to be weaker and weaker, and the spirit stronger: as it was said of the houses of *David* and *Saul*, this grew weaker and weaker, and the other grew stronger and stronger. But whilst we are in this World we must never cast down our weapons, but still continue fighting against sin; we must not expect to rest from our labours till we are dead. Let's then with all diligence and fidelity manage our spiritual warfare, and in all things labour to approve our hearts sincere to God, and we shall at length conclude with the Apostle, *Rom. 8, 37. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us.*

C H A P. XIV.

Containing the Comforts which sincere-hearted Persons enjoy in their Deaths.

Sect. I. **H**AVING represented in the former Chapter the great comforts which such whose hearts are sincere with God receive in their lives, in the second place I come to discover the comforts of them in their deaths: Although by no means may we make a judgment of the course of the life, by reason of some distempers and passions which oftentimes proceed from strength of Diseases; yet usually we read of the deliberate, composed and serious professions of many good Christians, which they have made on the bed of languishing. *Solomon saith, Prov. 14. 32. The righteous hath hope in his death.* And hope grounded on Divine promises affords us superabundant consolation. When the Prophet *Isaiah* was sent to *Hezekiah*, to give him warning of his death, which was suddenly approaching, then *Hezekiah* recollects his serious thoughts, and

and reflects upon his upright walking with God in his whole life and conversation; the remembrance whereof administered ground of singular consolation unto his Soul. The History is on record in holy Scripture; 2 Kings 20. 1, 2, 3. *In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death: and the Prophet Isaiah the son of Amos came to him, and said unto him, Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live. Then he turned his face unto the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which was good in thy sight.* Likewise St. Paul, apprehending the time of his dissolution to draw near, thus raiseth to himself a ground of strong consolation, 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. *For (saith he) I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing.* We commonly say, That the house of Death is the house of Truth; and where the senses are exercised, and the memory and judgment are not ex-

tiest, there will be plain dealing, and there will be made plain discoveries. As for such (for them only I now mention) whose hearts are upright with God, the remembrance of the sincerity of their hearts, next to the consolations of Gods spirit, will revive their spirits on their beds of languishing.

sect. 2. Let us consider before hand, that we shall all die; for Death is the common lot and portion of all mankind, *Heb. 9. 27.* it is Gods appointment: Would we not then be glad when we are cast upon our Death-beds, to have something at that time to comfort us? when we are leaving of these houses of Clay, and unclothing of our selves of our mortal Bodies, what is that which will be a ground of comfort to bear up our spirits? Will thousands of Gold and Silver purchase the Favour of God? can the greatest Mannors, Lordships, and Revenues of the World? Can an Imperial Diadem bribe Death to stay a longer time? Can all the Grantees and Potentates of this World, should they all unite as one man, avail any thing to make our peace with God? No, questionless: For no great Performances, nor great Riches, can either deliver themselves or us from the stroke of Death, nor pacifie their own
nor

nor our Consciences, nor make any peace and reconciliation either for themselves or for us at that day. Some in this World being arrested for Debt, have made the Serjeant drunk, and so have made an escape out of his hands. But it is altogether impossible to deal so with the grim Serjeant Death; none can escape Deaths dart, wherever they run Death will strike them to the heart. Now then, when all the Gold and Silver which the Universe can afford, when all the interest of Friends, though great and potent, cannot administer any comfort, peace and satisfaction to us when we lie upon our Death-beds, then Oh then! is that necessary instant, when the light of Gods gracious countenance, shining upon us in the face of Christ, can only revive our spirits, and give us real and durable joy, peace and comfort; when all creature-comforts are Physicians of Job 13. 4. no value, empty Cyphers, insufficient and unable to give us any satisfaction. This then is that good which the Psalmist had experienced, and prayed for it above all besides, Psal. 4. 6, 7, 8. *There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more then in the time*

*Aspice nos
sere in vul-
tu, ostende
te nobis fa-
vere, recipe
nos in gra-
tiam, conso-
lare te, et
tifica nos
tua presen-
tia : id
non sumus
soliciti quid
fiat in hoc
mundo, cur
improperi-
verunt ad
suas
ope, & ec-
clesia mis-
re domina-
tur. Mal-
kru.*

time that their corn and wine increased. I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for thou Lord only makest me dwell in safety. Hence it evidently appears, that the only saving good consists in the light of Gods gracious countenance. For this we must be earnest and indefatigable solicitors at the Throne of Grace : How- ever the men of the World may frown on us, and the Riches of the World may forsake us, yet if God smile on us, and be reconciled to us in Christ, he will never leave us nor forsake us, no not when we are gray-headed, and upon our beds of languishing ; and when our natural strength fails, and our diseases do much afflict us, and the pains thereof make us roar, the reflection of our well- spent time in giving up our strength to the service of God, and of improving of our health to glorifie God, will be even our Death-beds singular ground of con- solation, even the reviving of the me- mory of such time, strength, and health so employed in the service of God. When the faithfulest of our Friends, and such as are most willing to do us good, are not able to help us at all ; when learned Physicians have given us over, as alto- gether desperate and incurable ; and when the pains and pangs of a long, wasting,

wasting, lingring and tormenting disease, even a complication of diseases are inexpressible, and our throats rattle, and the abundance of Phlegm is ready to suffocate us, and our eye-strings are ready to break, and our eyes are dim and gassy, and every breath we take (though with much difficulty) is like to be our last breathing. Oh! then is the time that *the testimony of a good conscience*, that (as the Apostle professeth, 2 Cor. I. 12.) *in simplicity, and in godly sincerity, we had our conversation in this world*, will abundantly comfort us; and the apprehension of the love of God in Christ will revive our fainting spirits, and give strength in our weakness, and raise up our spirits, and make us courageous, that we shall not be afraid of Death, *the King of terrors*; which though it be terrible in it self, and (as the Philosopher saith) *the most terrible of all terrible things*; yet through the mediation of Jesus Christ, Death is a conquer'd Enemy; Christ hath conquer'd Death, and took away its sting. That which makes Death so terrible, is the sting of sin; but when the sting is took away, Death can no more hurt us than a Snake that hath lost its sting, or an Adder that hath its teeth knockt out. The Apostle cries out,

1 Cor.

φρδρεω
φρδρεω-
τω τω.

1 Cor. 15. 55, 56, 57. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of Death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. What is Death to a Child of God, reconciled to him by the Blood of Christ? "It's no more (as a dying Saint exprest) then a Child of God can embrace with both his arms: And he closing his arms together died immediately. To a Child of God Death is the greatest preferment; by Death he is translated from a vale of tears and misery, to everlasting happiness. It's like a Gaol-delivery, which delivers the Soul from the Bodies imprisonment, and sets it at liberty to enjoy the happiness amongst Saints in glory. VVhat's then the grand duty incumbent on us all? It is this: If we would desire to die happily, we must live holily; if we would die the death of the righteous, we must labour to live the life of the righteous: we should so live every day, as we desire to be found at the last day. And if we desire comfort in our death, we must make daily preparation, by approving our hearts to God in a holy and circumspect life and conversation. It is a very great mercy and condescension in God, to accept

cept Evangelical instead of Legal perfection; and to accept of a willing mind instead of real performances. For we read, *Heb. 11. 17.* that *by faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac.* And likewise the Apostle saith, *If there be a willing mind it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.* When then we come to die, to consider that our hearts are sincere with God, and that our peace is made with him by the redemption and intercession of Christ, and that all our sins are washt away, and we are made white in the Bloud of the Lamb, these Meditations will comfort us in Life and in Death.

Let's add hereunto for encouragement *Sect. 3.* and comfort to the living, the dying Speeches of many eminent Saints, who upon their Death-beds breath'd forth such savoury Speeches, which ought to be had in everlasting remembrance. I shall gather sparingly from so great a heap, and only select some choice Instances, which deserve a special remark to be set upon them.

Old *Simeon's* Song was sweet before his Funeral, saying, *Luke 2. 29, 30.* *Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace, according to thy Word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation,*
Stephen

Stephen, the Protomartyr, breath'd forth this dying Prayer, *Acts* 7. 59. *Lord Jesus receive my Spirit.*

ἱγνᾶτιος
ἐπιστολὴ
πρὸς ῥώμην.
Vid. Ignat.
epist. ad
Rom.

Ignatius, who liv'd in the first Century, who was (as the Ecclesiastical Writers say) twelve years of age when Christ was crucified, and afterward St. *John's* Auditor, used frequently to say, *My Love is crucified.* And when he was brought to Martyrdom, and the wild Beasts were let loose to tear him in pieces, he courageously said, "I am the Wheat or Grain to be ground with the teeth of Beasts, that I may be pure Bread for my Masters tooth: Let fire, rack, pullies, yea and all the torments of Hell come on me, so I may win Christ.

Polycarpus, when the Proconsul urged him to deny Christ, answered, "I have served Christ Eighty six years, and he hath not done me hurt, and shall I now deny him? When they would have tied him to the Stake to be burned, he desired to stand untied, saying, "Let me alone, I pray you; for he that gave me strength to come to this fire, will also give me patience to abide in the same, without your tying.

Cyprian, that eminent Martyr for the truth, after his condemnation, said, "Blessed be God for this Gaol-delivery.

Am.

Ambrose, on his Death bed, said to his Friends about him, "I have not so
"lived, that I am ashamed to live any
"longer; nor fear I death, because I
"have a good Lord. Some young men
seeing the excellent death of *St. Ambrose*,
and hearing what rare speeches he ut-
tered, one of those young men turned to
his fellow, and said, "Oh! that I might
"live with you, and die with him.

John Lambert, a Martyr in *Queen Ma-
ry's* daies, said amidst the flame, "None
"but Christ, none but Christ.

Mr. Bradford, at the Stake in *Smith-
field*, embraced the Reeds and Fagots
which were suddenly to be set on fire to
burn him, and said, "Strait is the Gate,
"and narrow is the Way that leadeth
"unto Life, and few there be that find it.
And he encouraged his fellow-Martyr,
saying, "Be of good comfort, Brother,
"for we shall have a merry Supper with
"the Lord this night: If there be any
"way to Heaven on horse-back, or in
"fiery Chariots, this is it.

Martin Luther, that great scourge of
the Pope, and Champion for the Prote-
stant Religion, on his Death-bed said,
"Thee, O Christ, have I taught, thee
"have I trusted, thee have I loved; into
"thy hands I commend my spirit.

Bucer,

Bucer, an eminent Reformer, said near his death, "No man by talk shall with-
 "draw my mind from Christ crucified
 "from Heaven, and my speedy Depart-
 "ment, on which my Soul is fixed. When
 one advised him to arm himself against
 Sarans temptations, he answered, "Sa-
 "tan hath nothing to do with me; God
 "forbid but that now my Soul should
 "be sure of sweet consolation.

John Ardley, a Martyr in Queen Mary's
 daies, said, "If every hair of my head
 "were a man, it should suffer death in
 "the faith I now stand in. To the same
 purpose *William Sparrow Spake*, and *Ag-
 nes Stanley*.

Alice Driver, when the Chain was about
 her Neck, "Here is (saith she)
 "goodly Neckerchief, blessed be God
 "for it.

John Noyes, a Martyr, kissing the Stake
 said, "Blessed be God that ever I was
 "born for this day. And he added farther
 to his fellow Martyrs a word of singu-
 lar consolation, saying, "We shall
 "not lose our lives in this fire, but
 "change them for a better; and for
 "Coals have Pearls, &c.

What need I produce any more In-
 stances? with what joy have many sin-
 cere-hearted Christians lookt death in
 the

the face, so that they had rather die than live?

Melancthon rejoiced when he was to die, saying; *That he should be with Christ, and enjoy fellowship with him and the Church triumphant; and then be freed from all those hot disputes and contentions of Divines, which were very great in those days.*

Grynæus, a great Scholar, when he came to die, said; *O happy day, when I may depart out of this troublesome and sinful world, and to go to those blessed Souls before departed.* He writing to his friend *Chytraus*, said; *If we never see one another again in this world, yet we shall meet in that place where Luther and Zuinglius agree very well together.*

Mr. Bolton on his dying bed said; *I am now drawing on apace to my dissolution: Hold out faith and patience, your work will quickly be attained.*

That great Magazine of Learning *Mr. John Selden*, when he came to die, said; *That he accounted all his Learning nothing at all in comparison of Christ.*

Mr. Giles Workman, a worthy Minister of the Gospel in *Glocester shire*, a little before his death said; *That he had a little sincerity of heart, and that was a comfort to him.*

H

Mr.

Mr. John Ferraby, a Minister of the Gospel in *Essex*, when he was dying said; *That he left his Wife and Children with God, and his gracious promises.*

Mr. Gifford, a Minister in *Northampton-shire*, said to his Children upon his Death-bed; *That if they feared God, (to which he earnestly exhorted them) they should not want; but if they did not fear God, he wisht that they might want till they did fear him.*

Mr. Samuel Hieron, a rare Minister, (whose excellent writings praise him in the gate) on his Death-bed said; *That the same God who took care for the Ravens and Sparrows, would likewise take care for the young Hierons.*

And so it came to pass, for God stirred up the hearts of some charitably affected persons, who carefully educated his Children; and so those young Hierons were well provided for.

I shall conclude this head with the words of the Psalmist; *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints*, Psal. 116. 15. *Surely he shall not be moved for ever; the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance*, Psal. 119. 6. And I will only add the words of Solomon, *Ecc. 10. 9. The memory of the just is blessed.*

C H A P. XV.

Containing the Happiness of the Saints in Heaven; or the inexpressible Consolations which the Godly, even all sincere-hearted Persons, enjoy in Heaven to all Eternity.

IN the third and last place, let's consider, or rather admire at the happiness, even the perfection of all comforts and happiness, which the Saints shall enjoy after death in the highest Heavens to all eternity. As for all those who lived in hypocrisie and dissimulation, and lived without repentance, and so died; and as for all such who lived without God in the world, having no fear of God before their eyes, but have committed sin with greediness, and have run into all excess of riot, and so die in their unbelief and impenitency, these are the Goats which shall stand on Christs left hand; and against them he will pronounce that dreadful sentence of condemnation, *Matth. 25. 41. Depart from me,*

3. The comforts of the godly after death.

Sect. I.

me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. But all upright and sincere-hearted Christians, who are only Christs sheep, they shall stand at Christs right hand; and he will pronounce to them that comfortable soul-ravishing sentence of absolution; *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, verse 34.*

1 Cor. 4.
13.
μεικαλῶς
μακάριον
ἐνθάδε.

However such who are Gods Jewels and precious in sight, are vilified and trampled on by the wicked of the world, as if they were no better than *the filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things*; yet at the general resurrection, both of just and unjust, there will be a resurrection of the names and of the causes of the righteous, however in this world they have been traduced and scorned. Then the meanest of glorified Saints (whom this world thought they could not think bad enough) shall have the preheminance and superiority above all the ungodly, though they have been never so great in this present world; for (so saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 49. 14.*) *the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning.* From this Scripture it plainly appears, that at the general resurrection the godly shall be known to

the

the whole world to have dominion and
 preheminence above all the ungodly
 men of this world. And that all such
 who truly fear God, though in this world
 they were in a poor and abject condi-
 tion, yet at that great day they shall be
 in a better condition, every way rich
 and honourable, and infinitely happier
 than any ungodly, great, and rich men
 can be in this present world.

*Quamvis
 autem de nunc
 sit in
 tenebris
 mundus,
 existat
 subito
 unum
 quod faci-
 em vere
 & eterne
 vite nobis
 restituet.
 Calv. in
 Loc.*

Farther, the godly in glory shall par-
 take of nothing else but joy and happi-
 ness, and the perfection of both; but
 damned wretches shall be for ever de-
 bar'd from all manner of joy, and par-
 take of nothing else but hopeless sor-
 row, and endless misery. At the ge-
 neral Judgment, when all without ex-
 ception shall appear before the Judgment-
 seat of Christ, then there shall appear a
 great and wide difference between good
 and bad, chaff and wheat, sheep and
 goats: that day will make a great and
 clear distinction. Then all the Enemies
 of Christ and of his Church, who re-
 joyced in persecuting Christ here on
 Earth in his Members, would be glad
 to creep into holes (if possible) that they
 might hide themselves from the wrath
 of the Lamb. Then they will wish that
 the mountains might fall upon them,

and thar Rocks and Hills, Dens or Caves might shelter and cover them from the face of the Lamb incensed against them. Then those bloody Persecutors of Christ *shall see him whom they have pierced*, Zech. 12. 10. Judas, who betrayed Christ with a hypocritical kiss; Pilate, who (notwithstanding the reluctancy of his own conscience) condemned Christ to please the people, and released *Barabbas*, an infamous Thief and Murtherer; the Soldiers, who crucified him; and after they had first been his Executioners, were his Executors to take his Garments: All these, and all other Enemies of Jesus Christ, shall see him at that *great Day* to their terror and condemnation. Those giddy-pated people, who a little before cried to Christ *Hosanna*, and afterwards cried, *Crucifie him, Crucifie him*, shall appear before Christs Judgment-seat, and then receive their sentence. Those cursed Jews, who wisht that *the blood of Christ might be upon them, and their Children* (except such only who are washt in Christs blood) shall to their dread, and horror be condemn'd for embrewing their hands in the innocent blood of Christ.

señ. 2. At the day of Judgment all fals Judgments, and unrighteous sentences past on

on earth shall be reverst. Pontius Pilate who past an unjust judgment against Christ, shall have a just judgment past upon him. *Luther* used to say, that at the day of judgment, John Huss and Jerome of Prague shall appear to be good men, when the Pope and his Cardinalls shall appear to be vile, and wicked wretches. *St Bernard* used to say. That the Day will come, it will certainly come, when God will judg over again all false judgment. But as for all those whose hearts were upright with God, whilst they liv'd in this world, these after death are translated into an estate of glory and happiness, and in the highest heavens receive consolations beyond all expression, and a weight of glory beyond the capacity of any mortal man, which Christ gives to all his Children, who in their Pilgrimage on earth, endeavoured with their whole heart, and strength, to serve the Lord in sincerity, and in truth. All those who were on earth Sincere-hearted, and real Saints, shall be acknowledged to be such by Christ himself at the Day of Judgment. No sin, no failing, nor imperfection shall at all be layd to their Charge in that day; for all failings and sins, and all manner of imperfections shall be washt away in the blood of Jesus Christ. What

*Luth.
Loc.
Com.*

Veniet Veniet Dies quando male judicata rejudicabit Deus. Bern.

ever good things the Saints have done on earth, shall be all remembred, and not any one thing forgotten at the day of judgment. But whatever was bad and sinfull that they committed on earth, shall not be layd to their Charge, but shall be blotted out of the Book of *Gods Remembrance*, and God will cast them into the depth of the sea. O! What a joyfull day, and full of Comfort will the day of judgment be to all the Children of God! Then they shall lift up their heads with Comfort and behold him who is their Judg, as their *Redeemer, Advocate, Intercessor, and Elder Brother*, and he will pronounce for them a sentence of Absolution. At that day, all glorified Saints shall have their bodily eyes irradiated with the splendor of glory, and they shall be inabled to behold the Beatificall Vision, and this is the Happiness of all Happiness, and this only is their portion, and appropriated to them alone who are *pure in heart*. They are blessed (as our Saviour pronounceth them) *Who are pure in heart, for they shall see God*. Then the Saints in glory shall sit in Judgment as Assessors with Christ, and shall approve of the righteous sentence of Christ in Condemning their unrighteous Judges.

Then

Sect. 2. *sincere Persons happines after death.* 121

Then they shall see the Omnipotent Eternal Jehovah, the Being of all Beings the first person in Trinity uncreated, unbegotten, and unproceeding: Then they shall see Christ the Mediator of the New Covenant, their only Saviour and Redeemer uncreated, but begotten, and not proceeding, who is the second Person in Trinity: Then they shall see the holy Ghost the third Person in Trinity neither created, nor begotten, but proceeding from both. The Glorified Saints (what they believed when they were militant on earth) shall in heaven understand the great Mystery of the Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity. One glorified Saint shall know more, then all the Learned men in the world. I'll conclude with this Doxology.

Now to the holy and blessed Trinity, and one God in Unity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be ascribed all Honour and Glory, Praise and Thanksgiving, Dominion and Obedience, henceforth and unto all Eternity,

Amen,

6 JY 53



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